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Champion
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MURDER PROBE AFTER MAN FOUND DEAD AT SCENE OF HOUSE FIRE

36-year-old man and woman, 43, arrested

Report by **Henry James**

A MURDER investigation has been launched in Skelmersdale after the body of a man was discovered following a blaze at a house in the town.

Police were called at 8.10am on Saturday, July 21 by the Ambulance Service after a report of a fire at an address in Elmridge, Tanhouse.

Emergency services attended and a man, believed to be in his 40s, was found at the property. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Following initial investigation the man's death is believed to be suspicious and detectives have launched a murder inquiry.

A man and woman, both from Skelmersdale, have since been arrested on suspicion of murder.

The cause of the fire is currently being treated as unexplained.

Detectives are appealing for information and urging anyone who can assist with their enquiries to come forward.

Detective superintendent Paul Withers, of Lancashire Police, said: "These are tragic circumstances and my thoughts are with the man's family and friends at this time.

"While we have made two arrests, we continue to appeal for any information in connection with our investigation.

"If you saw anything which might help our enquiries, please come forward."

A 36-year-old man and a 43-year-old woman, both from Skelmersdale, have been arrested on suspicion of murder and are currently in custody.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 101 quoting incident reference 0377 of July 21.

Police presence outside the premises in Elmridge, Tanhouse on Sunday.

School's salute to ever-present pupil Ciara . . .

STAFF and fellow pupils at a Skelmersdale primary school have celebrated the achievements of Ciara Willis *(above)* who hasn't missed a single day at school in seven years.

The 11-year-old clocked her 100% attendance record at Holland Moor Primary.

Michael Beale, headteacher at the school in Cornbrook, said: "Ciara has completed 1,330 school days at Holland Moor over the past seven years. She has not missed even a second of school time. She's never been absent and she's never been late.

"All the staff have delighted in her successes and in the many ways she has seized every opportunity presented to her.

"100 per cent attendance over an entire school career is an unparalleled achievement in the history of the school.

"The whole school community has celebrated Ciara's accomplishment and we hope it will be an inspiration to many other pupils."

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Brighter Future Workshop loses battle for survival

Charity to close in August after failing to secure funding

Report by **Henry James**

A WEST Lancashire-based charity which employs young disabled people to recycle donated mobility equipment will close in August after failing to secure the £50,000 funding it needed to stay open.

Earlier this year the Champion reported that Brighter Future Workshop, based at Greenhey Place in Skelmersdale, was in trouble financially.

Following the closure announcement Peter Cousins MBE, chairman of Brighter Future Workshop, said: "We are absolutely devastated that we are going to have to close. We developed a unique charity that has achieved national and international acclaim.

"Since we opened in 2005 we have helped disabled people aged from two to 90.

"Our work has allowed disabled people to regain their mobility for a very little price.

Trained

"It is a great blow to us all at Brighter Future but the real loss will be felt by the young disabled people."

Brighter Future Workshop primarily served West Lancashire, it was created by local people with disabilities to help other people with disabilities, and operated by them.

Since its foundation it has trained more than 350 young disabled people during more than 120,000 training hours. The young people with disabilities worked alongside technicians, helping to refurbish mobility equipment such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters and powerchairs.

Happier times . . .the Countess of Wessex's visit to Brighter Future Workshop in October 2012

That equipment was then sold back to needy disabled people who can't afford costly new mobility equipment.

The charity has won a host of awards including a Queen's Award for Sustainable Development; Best Social Enterprise England; Best Social Enterprise UK; Best Social Firm in Europe; Deloitte Innovation Pioneers; and The Big Society Award.

It was also honoured in October 2012 with a royal visit by the Countess of Wessex.

Peter Cousins added: "We have worked tirelessly to make Brighter Future sustainable, achieving 91% of our costs through earned income, but this in itself is not enough.

"Our showroom sales have dropped dramatically as local people are choosing to buy on the Internet. That, along with having no funding for three years, has depleted our reserves and we have no choice but to close our doors before the charity becomes insolvent.

"I would like to thank the people who donated to try to help us obtain the funding we needed to continue operating. This amounted to £3,715 on July 20 and the final amount raised will show in our final accounts and will be passed on to another charity with similar aims.

"A letter will be sent to this newspaper showing where the money went to.

"We will also be holding a closing-down sale at both our Skelmersdale and Ormskirk branches as we need to sell all our stock at reduced prices."

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The new computer-generated image released by St Modwen showcasing the proposed town-centre scheme and pinpointing the planned Lidl and B&M stores

Council pledges £19m funding to deliver first phase of long-awaited town-centre scheme

Report by **Henry James**

MP gives cautious welcome to announcement but warns residents will be sceptical until work starts

WEST Lancs Council, working with developers St Modwen and partner Homes England, agreed at its council meeting on July 18 to secure funding to deliver the £19m first phase of development proposals to extend Skelmersdale town centre.

The decision - described as a 'crucial step forward' - will see the council commercially invest in the scheme to enable delivery of the first phase and partners can now focus on working towards making the plans a reality and announcing a delivery start date for the scheme.

The council has said the £19m will be funded through a number of income streams including the disposal of land assets and borrowing.

The announcement follows the recent news that budget supermarket chain Lidl will occupy a 20,800 sq. ft. unit and Merseyside-based B&M will open a new large format 20,000 sq. ft. store, when the ambitious project is delivered.

Paul Batho, development director for St Modwen, said: "This is a major milestone reached and a significant step towards the delivery of this long-awaited town centre scheme.

"It is great news for the people of Skelmersdale, who have been waiting for news on further progress towards delivering the development."

The commercial investment made by the council in this first phase of the town centre scheme is hoped to be a catalyst for further investment in subsequent phases.

The new scheme coincides with another "major investment" programme as the borough council progresses its plans for a new and enhanced leisure and wellbeing facility for the local community.

John Harrison, the authority's director of development and regeneration, said: "The council has long been committed to the delivery of an enlarged town centre for Skelmersdale, incorporating new retail and leisure development.

"This retail scheme, along with the adjacent new leisure and wellbeing facilities, forms part of a major investment programme by the council and its partners in Skelmersdale.

Enhancements

"In addition, residential development is soon to start on sites located immediately adjacent to the town centre.

"This is a really positive time for Skelmersdale and the council and its partners will now be working to put in place the necessary agreements to secure commencement of the new retail development as quickly as possible."

Plans for the town centre include "extensive improvements" to the public realm, including a new pedestrian link between the college and the Concourse shopping centre, as well as enhancements to the public areas outside the library and Nye Bevan Pool.

The council is also working with owners of the Concourse to help realise their plans for a multi-screen cinema.

Meanwhile St Modwen has also released a new computer generated image showcasing the town centre scheme and highlighting the location of the Lidl and B&M stores.

Responding to the news that West Lancs Council is to invest millions of pounds in kick-starting the long-overdue development of Skelmersdale town centre, borough MP, Rosie Cooper, said: "I have campaigned for a new Skelmersdale town centre for many, many years and it is welcome news that plans seem to be progressing. This is a start - an underwhelming one but a start nonetheless - but the council and St Modwen must see this as a stepping stone and the following phases need to arrive quickly. I have always said that residents will continue to remain sceptical until they see diggers on site and work commencing.

"Skelmersdale is crying out for a diverse shopping experience, new outlets and a night-time economy. We need to build, not just talk about cinemas and new dining and social facilities as part of the wider offering.

"I will continue to do all I can to support residents, traders, retailers, the Concourse, the council and St Modwen in finally bringing this long-overdue town centre to fruition and start bringing back in some of that 90% of Skelmersdale spend that currently goes outside of the town.

"The Concourse management must be on board with this and the project must give an opportunity for existing traders and businesses to voice their opinions and concerns, and be given assurance that this new town centre will complement their operations by increasing footfall, and not be a replacement for them."

Opposition groups welcome 'U-turn' on £25 bin charge

WEST Lancs Council's decision to stop charging residents £25 for a blue wheelie bin to collect glass, cans and plastic bottles has been welcomed by Conservative and Our West Lancashire councillors who have labelled it a U-turn by the ruling Labour group.

The council has said that residents who currently have a blue box who are using other containers such as bags or storage boxes or have had a blue box in the past for glass, cans and plastic bottles, can request a free blue bin if ordered by October 31.

From November 1, any blue bins requested to replace a blue box will incur a charge.

Any resident who has already ordered and paid for a blue bin to replace a blue box since March 12 will receive a full refund. These residents are known to the council and will receive a letter shortly to inform them of their refund and how the money will be refunded back into their accounts.

The Conservative group on the council have claimed victory for the decision to scrap the charge and said: "We have mounted a concerted campaign against Labour's unfair introduction of the £25 charge for blue wheelie bins to those residents who had previously opted to continue to use blue boxes and bags."

Meanwhile Our West Lancashire's Councillor Adrian Owens claimed he had first raised the matter and called the announcement a "U-turn."

Heidi McDougall, director of leisure and environment at West Lancs Council, said: "A lot of the blue boxes have disappeared and residents are utilising various types of containers to present their waste causing operational and health and safety issues. Hopefully the offer of free bins will help these residents make the switch

Continued on Page 5

Sweet reward for teacher who topped popularity poll

A HUSBAND-and-wife team who run a sweet stall in the Concourse shopping centre organised a competition to celebrate the 45th birthday of the business.

Paul and Laura Davies, who have run the stall for the last eight years, asked customers to vote for their favourite school teacher via social media with the couple offering a special chocolate bouquet for the winner.

Mr Davies said: "The response was amazing - we had more than 600 votes placed.

"The winner was Miss McKnight of Bishop Martin CE Primary School in Digmoor who received the most votes and my wife and I went along to surprise her with the bouquet at the school.

"We would like to thank everyone who voted as the response was amazing and also offer our congratulations to Miss McKnight for winning."

Miss McKnight with her chocolate bouquet

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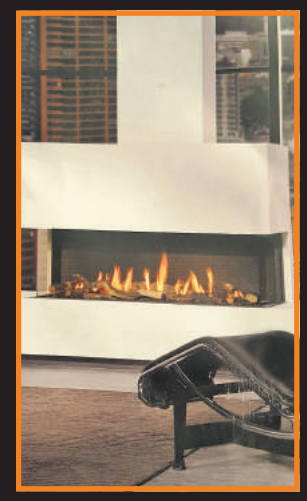

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Students get low-down on high-speed rail project

TWO teams of students from West Lancashire College were invited to an event in London to learn about the High Speed Two (HS2) railway project.

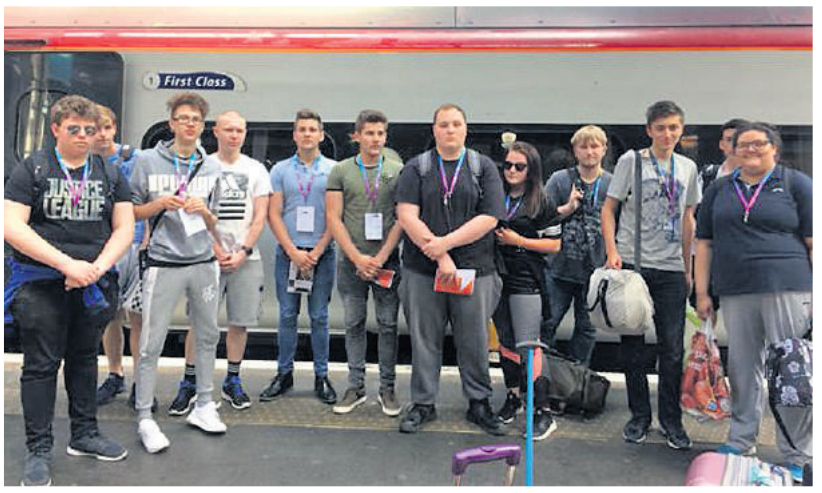
The 'Fast Trackers – Be the Engineers of the Future Event' saw the students visit railway stations in the capital and attend a star-studded evening of talks at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

After working with 40 engineers from across Network Rail and the global consultancy, Mott MacDonald, the students earned an Industrial Cadets' gold award from the Engineering Development Trust.

Competitions were held and both West Lancashire College teams won individual awards judged by an expert panel of special guests.

All of the college's attendees were nominated for an award and Ben Johnson won Most Improved Team Public Speaker Award while Philip Howarth and James O'Brien won Outstanding Student Awards.

Enrichment co-ordinator at the college, Rebecca Connick who took part in the trip, said: "I am so proud of these learners and I would like to congratulate all who attended. Not only did we receive fabulous feedback about their impeccable behaviour, but we returned home with a host of awards."



West Lancashire College students pictured during their London trip.

Council U-turn on bin charge

From Page 3

before the end of October and welcome a more efficient service."

Councillor David Westley, Conservative group leader, said: "I am delighted that Labour have finally seen sense. Labour had announced the council intended to stop the collection of recyclables from blue boxes and blue bins and was forcing residents to pay a £25 charge for a blue wheelie bin.

"This was contrary to the council's previous policy and unfair. Labour had allowed the recent changes to be slipped in under delegated authority without any democratic debate on what was a clear change in policy."

Cllr. Owens added: "Our West Lancashire were delighted that the council meeting ratified this policy reversal last week. Now, residents who kept a blue box in 2013 when blue bins were introduced will be treated equitably and receive a blue bin without charge up until the end of October."

Growing concerns over rise in violent crime

Report by **Henry James**

Borough MP seeks meeting with Home Secretary to discuss residents' fears over effects of cuts to policing budget

ROSIE Cooper says she has been in "regular contact" with police chiefs and has also requested a meeting with the Home Secretary to discuss an increase in crime and violence in the borough including a serious stabbing, an arson attack and several other knife-related incidents.

The West Lancs MP also pledged to raise residents' concerns over cuts to the policing budget resulting in fewer officers on the streets.

Among serious incidents reported in recent weeks are a stabbing in Birch Green, a suspected murder in Tanhouse and a further unrelated attack involving either an axe or a machete according to witnesses in the Carfield area of Skelmersdale. Earlier this year there was also a double stabbing in Ormskirk.

Rosie Cooper said: "I am speaking with the Chief Constable at Lancashire Constabulary on a regular basis about local crime and violence and I have written to the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, calling for a meeting to discuss these increases and the effects of cuts to police budgets on local policing.

Weapons

"People believe that the effects of the police cuts have resulted in this stark and very clear increase in violent crime. Local residents must have confidence and that is clearly lacking at present. Without the visible presence of police on the beat, those carrying out these acts and carrying weapons do not fear getting caught – this must change.

"My constituents no longer feel safe, especially as knives are so easily obtained - we need to get knives off the streets.

"We need a knife amnesty immediately to rid the area of many of its weapons and educate young people about the danger of carrying knives, to themselves as well as others.

"I welcome the police plan to provide knife bins on the Digmoor and Tanhouse estates which will encourage the anonymous surrendering of knives. They need to be provided urgently.

"Tenants are also being reminded that council tenancies may well be terminated if those addresses are connected to offences, even if it isn't the registered tenant who offends."

Volunteer-run youth club celebrates first birthday with a 'Monster' party

A VOLUNTEER-run youth club for children aged between eight and 13 is celebrating its first birthday.

The Little Monsters Club meets at the Eavesdale Children and Family Wellbeing Centre in Tanhouise every Wednesday evening from 6 to 8pm.

The group was set up to provide young people a place where they can go to be with other youngsters in a safe and fun environment.

A spokesperson for the group said: "Many of the volunteers have a long history of both voluntary and paid work providing these opportunities to young people and wanted to keep these opportunities available for them, in Skelmersdale as many leisure opportunities in the town for young people have been affected by cuts to services and reduction in funding."

In its first year Little Monsters Club has received grants, awards and donations from a Soup Dragon event, Oaks Church, West Lancashire Borough Council, and Active Lancashire.

This money has been spent on resources to enable the young people to enjoy a range of opportunities every week.

A birthday party to celebrate a successful first year was held on Saturday, July 21 supported by donations from local companies, Nolan Construction and SJ Brickwork and Walkers.

Volunteers at the Little Monsters Club for youngsters aged eight to 13 which is celebrating its first birthday.

All refreshments and activities were provided at no cost to those who attended.

The group has helped young people already and hopes to continue to grow from strength to strength.

Anyone interested in attending or who would like to make a donation to the group is asked to email LittleMonstersClub@outlook.com.

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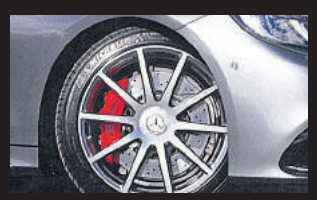

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Poll date for voters in Knowsley ward

VOTERS in the Knowsley ward of West Lancs Council will go the polls tomorrow (Thursday, July 26) to elect a new councillor following the resignation of Labour's Michelle Aldridge.

Three candidates will contest the seat vacated by Councillor Aldridge in June. They are Gareth Dowling (Labour); Kate Mitchell (Independent) and Jeffrey Vernon (Conservative).

Cllr. Aldridge cited "personal commitments" for her decision to stand from the role just six weeks after being voted in at the local elections held on May 3.

Edge Hill wins global award for teaching

Ormskirk university acknowledged as one of world's finest for 'quality of support and engagement for students'

EDGE Hill has been acknowledged as one of the world's finest teaching institutions.

The Ormskirk university was presented with a prestigious Global Teaching Excellence Spotlight Award in recognition of 'the quality of support and engagement infrastructure for students' at a ceremony in Edinburgh.

The Global Teaching Excellence Awards (GTEA) recognise and celebrate institution-wide commitment to the pursuit of teaching excellence and are open to all providers of higher education across the world.

Institutions based in 41 countries across six continents were considered as part of the judging process. The 17 finalists included prestigious universities from Australia, Canada and South Africa, with Edge Hill being one of just five to receive a Global Teaching Excellence Spotlight Award.

Edge Hill vice-chancellor, Dr John Cater, said: "This international award is a significant endorsement of the excellence of teaching and learning at this university. Our staff are wholeheartedly dedicated to students and their achievement, and the university continues to invest in the best possible facilities for learning, our new £27m Catalyst building being just one example.

Edge Hill vice-chancellor Dr John Cater - "a significant endorsement."

"Together with our TEF Gold ranking for teaching excellence and the award of University of the Year for Student Retention by the Times and Sunday Times, the GTEA Spotlight Award demonstrates that we are delivering world-class outcomes for the people who matter most - our students."

Svava Bjarnason, chair of the GTEA 2018 judging panel and a former member of the World Bank Education Sector Board, said: "Having chaired the inaugural GTEA judging panel last year, it was an honour to continue in the role in 2018. This year's entries were of a very high calibre and I congratulate all the 2018 finalists."

Alison Johns, chief executive of Advance HE said "The quality of submissions for GTEA 2018 was outstanding. The finalists all provided exemplary evidence of their commitment to the pursuit of teaching excellence and it is so important to recognise and reward this on a global stage. Great teaching galvanises staff and students. It also has far-reaching implications for society as a whole. The GTEA 2018 finalists deserve to be recognised!"

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OLD BED RECYCLING SERVICE

Members of banned neo-Nazi group linked to Rosie Cooper murder plot jailed

TWO more men have been jailed for being members of a far-right group linked to a plot to murder West Lancashire MP Rosie Cooper.

Following a trial lasting more than five weeks, Christopher Lythgoe, 32, from Warrington, and Matthew Hankinson, 24, from Newton-le-Willows, were convicted and sentenced to eight years and six years jail respectively.

Lythgoe was arrested when police started an investigation into a plot to murder Ms Cooper.

During the trial Jack Renshaw, 23, from Skelmersdale admitted he bought a machete with the intention of killing the MP. He was sentenced to six years in jail.

The police got to hear about Renshaw's plan after former National Action member, Robbie Mullen, told anti-racism charity Hope Not Hate who informed the police.

National Action's presence increased at demonstrations and far-right rallies up until 2016, when the group was branded a terrorist organisation, after its members showed public support for the murder of Jo Cox MP.

Jurors could not decide if Renshaw was a member of the banned group but it can now be revealed that he has also been convicted of stirring up racial hatred in speeches in 2016.

Rosie Cooper

Six men faced trial at the Old Bailey on charges of being members of National Action. One of the six, Garron Helm, 24, from Seaforth was found not guilty of being a member of the group.

Addressing Lythgoe as he sentenced him on Wednesday, July 18, the judge called him a fully-fledged neo-Nazi. The judge also said that Hankinson had a neo-Nazi perverted ideology as he sentenced him to six years imprisonment.

Detective Superintendent Will Chatterton, head of Investigations for Counter Terrorism Policing for the North West, said: "These individuals were not only intent on broadcasting their vile views and hate speech but were prepared to do so at whatever cost, with no regard for the people who they were openly wanting to harm.

"People who support extremism of any kind that threatens the safety of others can expect to be investigated by counter terrorism officers - something which, with the help of partner agencies, has made today's outcome possible, resulting in a significant blow to National Action and those who share their extremist views.

Targeted

"We will continue in our fight against those who want to bring a reign of terror to the UK, putting them behind bars where they are unable to continue their terrorist manifesto."

In a statement issued after the verdicts, Rosie Cooper said: "I think it's awful that any public servant - teacher, nurse, doctor, police, MP - should be targeted and threatened with violence simply because of the job they do. To that end, I'd like to thank Robbie Mullen, whose information saved my life.

"I'd also like to thank Lancashire and Merseyside Police and the counter-terrorism police who have supported me greatly, and who have kept me, my staff and the general public safe."

Care trust launches initiative to speed up information sharing

LANCASHIRE Care NHS Foundation Trust has launched a new initiative allowing health and care providers in Lancashire and South Cumbria to integrate their care systems and share information quickly and efficiently.

The Lancashire Person Record Exchange Service (LPRES) allows clinical documents to be shared with other health and social care providers electronically instead of the traditional method of sending printed hard copies in the post

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Crowds flock to Beacon Park for all the fun of the Fayre!

BEACON Country Park hosted the annual Green Fayre on Saturday and Sunday, July 21 and 22.

Visitors enjoyed a range of attractions and family entertainment including jousting, birds of prey displays, farm animals, Viking encampments, craft demonstrations, chainsaw carving, music, dog shows, caving, archery, bouncy castles, a climbing wall and more.

Meanwhile a busy month for outdoor pursuits continues with the start of the West Lancashire Walking Festival and the summer Junior Rangers events.

For the organised walks children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. When attending park and countryside events residents are advised to wear suitable footwear and clothing for the weather, ground conditions and the planned activity. And during the current hot weather it is also recommended to have a supply of water.

A winner's rosette for Poppy the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel at the Green Fayre.

West Lancs Deputy Mayor, Councillor Gaynar Owen and Countryside Ranger, Chris Horsfall meet Viking members of the re-enactors, Wirhalh Skip Felgar at their Green Fayre encampment.

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Council agrees plan to turn empty student properties back into family homes

... but OWL say 'convoluted scheme' will bail out landlords and won't provide affordable housing

Report by **Kenny Parker**

WEST Lancs Council has agreed a motion to consider providing loans to landlords with empty student properties to turn them back into family homes.

The proposal was the result of a Labour group amendment to a motion tabled by Our West Lancashire for the council to buy empty student properties and turn them into affordable housing.

The independents had highlighted that there are about 70 student houses in Ormskirk with more than 300 spare rooms still seeking students for September, while at the same time there is a need for more affordable houses for families.

They also said the council also has a surplus of £800k that needs to be spent in the next 12 months or returned to central government coffers.

The amendment to the motion, proposed by Councillor Jenny Forshaw, portfolio holder for housing and landlord services, offers loans to landlords to convert their empty student properties into saleable family homes instead.

Councillor Ian Davis

Cllr. Forshaw said it would be low-risk as the money will be returned upon the sale of the property.'

However, Our West Lancashire expressed disappointment with the plans. The group's finance spokesman, Councillor Ian Davis, said: "Labour have put forward a convoluted loan scheme to bail out failed landlords. Their scheme would not provide any affordable housing and involve complicated loans to student landlords to bail them out of poor decisions.

"The Conservatives are happy to leave the problem unresolved and the Labour plans have no timescale in any event.

"Our West Lancashire have been highlighting for some time the oversupply of student housing in Ormskirk and finally the ruling Labour group are catching up with us. Our motion put forward a scheme which would have created six or seven new affordable houses in Ormskirk. It was a simple method which was capable of quick implementation and with scope to expand in the future if it was a success. This new scheme offers none of that."

He added that OWL are pressing for an overall limit on student housing in the new Local Plan and had a policy to increase council inspections on existing student properties.

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Local councils urged to back county's planning guidelines on takeaways

Call to restrict fast food outlets in 'deprived' areas to tackle growing obesity problem

HEALTH chiefs at Lancashire County Council are urging district councils to support new guidelines for fast food takeaway applications in a bid to tackle growing obesity levels.

The move follows a notice of motion by County Councillor Charlie Edwards, put forward at full council on Thursday, July 19.

Research shows that environment has a major effect on health, and issues such as the number of takeaways have a direct effect on obesity levels in communities.

More than 63% of Lancashire's population is overweight or obese - higher than the national average - with more than 600,000 adults in the county believed to be living with an excess weight problem.

The National Child Measurement Programme (2016/17) found that 23.5% of Reception year children and 18.9% of Year 6 children, a total of 7,262, were either overweight or obese.

County council guidelines set out that district councils should establish 400-metre takeaway restriction zones around secondary schools and refuse applications for new takeaways in wards where 15% of Year 6 children or 10% of Reception children are classed as obese.

County Councillor Charlie Edwards

Applications should also be refused to prevent clustering of too many takeaways in less-affluent areas.

County Councillor Edwards, lead member for health and adult services, said: "Nearly half of Lancashire's fast food outlets fall within wards ranked among the 20% most deprived in the country and research clearly demonstrates the link between clusters of fast food outlets and the number of people classed as overweight or obese in an area.

"Our public health team has researched best practice from across the UK to come up with a potential proposal to help address this. These takeaway guidelines will ensure that schoolchildren and those living in communities where obesity rates are higher aren't faced with more fast food options.

"We'll be writing to our colleagues in district councils, encouraging them to consider adopting these guidelines when making planning decisions on fast food outlets.."

In addition to the planning guidelines, the county council aims to tackle obesity through its Active Lives and Healthy Weight Scheme, which is run by leisure providers across the county. It runs activities such as Your Mile Your Way to encourage people to become more physically active and support schools to encourage pupils to take exercise.

Schools programmes include the Mile a Day scheme where children are encouraged to run or walk for a mile each day during school time where appropriate.

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Jake's cool name for hospital's new quiet room for children

LOCAL children have helped to design a new quiet room at Ormskirk Hospital for young patients who need a calming environment.

The room, which includes a TV, sensory toys and decoration, has been fitted out with support from the NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group and Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust.

And it has been named the 'Chillaxation Room' following a suggestion put forward by Jake Jones, from Skelmersdale, a member of the West Lancashire Children and Adolescent Mental Health patient group whose ideas were incorporated into the final design of the room.

"The name just popped into my head," said 13-year-old Jake, 13, a pupil at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College in Glenburn Road, Skelmerdale.

He joined staff and other members of the group to mark the opening of the Chillaxation Room in the children's department at the hospital in Wigan Road, Ormskirk.

Paediatric liaison nurse at the hospital, Fiona Short, said: "We are very pleased with the room now it is finished and thank the participation group for their ideas and input. We have had good feedback from children and families who have used the room so far."

● **Top: Jake Jones with his sign for 'The Chillaxation Room' at Ormskirk Hospital.**

● **Above: Jake with families and members of the hospital's paediatric team in the room.**

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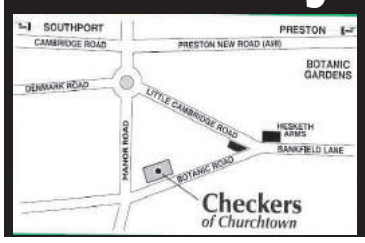

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Hillsborough match commander to face trial with former football club secretary

HILLSBOROUGH match commander David Duckenfield will face a joint trial with former Sheffield Wednesday club secretary Graham Mackrell after a bid to hold separate trials was rejected.

An application put forward by Mackrell's lawyers, sought permission to be heard by a different jury for his alleged offences in connection to the 1989 disaster, which resulted in the deaths of 96 Liverpool fans. However, Sir Peter Openshaw at Preston Crown Court turned down the application and they will stand trial together at the same court as scheduled on January 14.

Duckenfield, 73, is charged with manslaughter by gross negligence over the deaths of 95 football supporters and Mackrell is charged with an offence involving the stadium safety certificate and a health and safety offence.

Under the law at the time, there can be no prosecution for the death of the 96th victim, Tony Bland, as he died more than a year and a day after his injuries were caused.

Both defendants are set to enter their pleas at a pre-trial hearing at Preston Crown Court on September 10.

Alex is toast of Moor Hall!

West Lancs wine waiter voted best in UK

A WINE waiter at a West Lancs restaurant is the toast of his colleagues after being crowned Champagne Taittinger UK Sommelier of the Year 2018.

Alex Frequin, head sommelier at Moor Hall in Aughton, beat rivals from renowned restaurants throughout the country in a closely-contested final at the Savoy Hotel in London.

After a series of tasks, 12 competing sommeliers were whittled down to just three who then completed their final tasks in front of a live audience.

Commenting on his win in the competition, organised by industry magazine The Caterer and sponsored by French champagne producers, Champagne Taittinger, Alex said: "I feel tired but so happy. We all work hard and know how tough it is, but this is incredible.

"I was in the final with two other great sommeliers and we all had the chance to train together. We all work in businesses in the north so it was special to be in the final with them.

"It's a passion and I've worked hard for this."

Finalists were required to identify errors on a wine list; undergo blind taste tests of wines and spirits; serve tables of former winners in a restaurant role play situation; and finally to pour a magnum of Champagne Taittinger into 20 glasses.

Letting success go to his head in the nicest possible way . . . Alex celebrates his win.

Alex's prize for his success includes a mentoring programme and an all-expense-paid educational trip to the Rioja wine-producing region of Spain. He also won a jeroboam of Champagne Taittinger Prestige Rosé and a Riedel decanter.

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Martin Mere news

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Come and see the crowned cranes at Martin Mere

A new pair of African crowned cranes have been released into WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre's aviary.

Grounds Manager, Steve Nasir, said: "Crowned cranes are very popular with our visitors and we are very pleased to have a pair back at Martin Mere. The male is 6 years old and has been at Martin Mere for some time but without a partner so we were delighted when the opportunity to get a 5 year old female from Paignton Zoo came up. The pair have been together for two months now and are getting on well. They have been put out in our aviary and it is hoped that they will become a breeding pair – watch this space."

The pair of Crowned cranes can be viewed from the aviary within the WOW area of the grounds.

African Crowned cranes are most notable for their stiff crown of gold feathers on the top of their head. They are about 1m (3.3 ft) tall and weighs 3.5 kg (7.7 lbs) with a wingspan of 2 m (6.5 ft). The chicks in contrast are orange in colour with lovely black markings on their back.

In other news at the centre: We are all prepared for the start of the Bionic Bugs summer activities which begin on Saturday 28 July – collect stickers for doing 8 bug-tastic activities as well as exploring to find six GIANT animatronic bugs around the grounds.

WWT Martin Mere Wetland Centre is open every day (except Christmas Day) from 9.30am to 6pm and parking is free of charge. Situated off the A59, it is signposted from the M61, M58 and M6. The Centre is also accessible via the Southport to Manchester and the Liverpool to Preston line by train from Burscough Rail Stations. Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere/ to find out what's on all year round at Martin Mere and the other eight WWT Wetland Centres.

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

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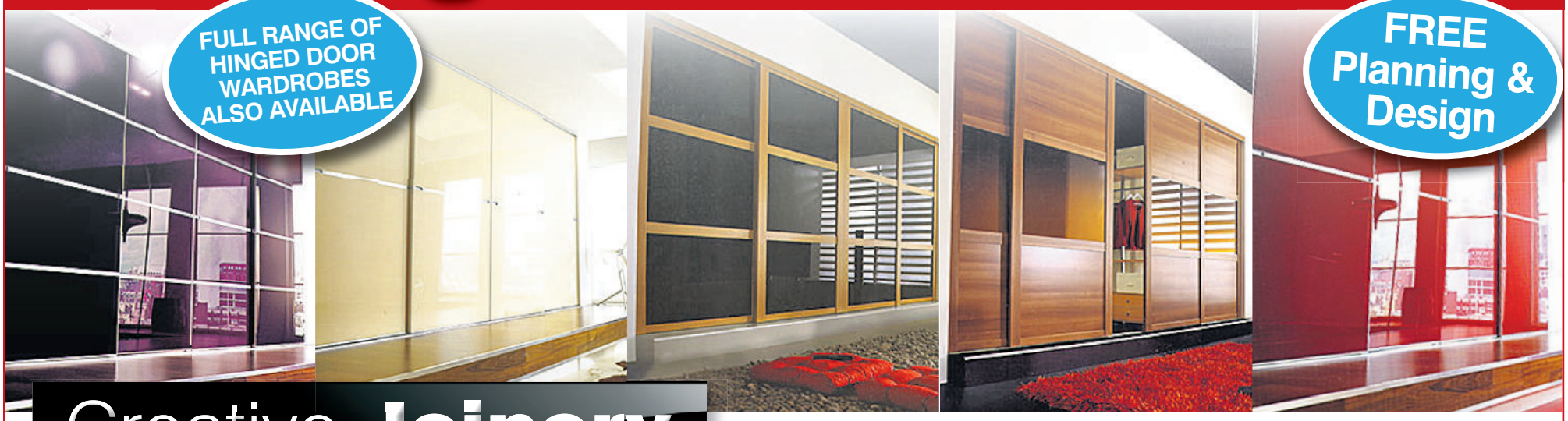

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Third Gingerbread Festival serves up recipe for success!

Report by **Kenny Parker**

ORGANISERS have hailed the third Ormskirk Gingerbread Festival an outstanding success with a winning formula featuring music, food, history, and a little bit of magic!

Staged at venues throughout the town centre, the festival, organised by the Ormskirk Community Partnership and the Town Centre Management Group, was opened by the Mayor of West Lancs, Councillor Noel Delaney.

As well as a full programme of entertainment, including magicians, music and singing acts throughout the day, there was a special gingerbread-themed competition, while Edge Hill University's Strolling Players kept a young audience enthralled with a gripping tale based on Ormskirk.

Complimented

Local history and heritage stalls were also kept busy helping people with questions about the town's past and advising them on how to trace their family history.

And stalls, shops, eateries and bars reportedly experienced a roaring trade with those supplying gingerbread soon sold out.

Irene Slack, secretary of Ormskirk Community Partnership and a member of Team Gingerbread, said: "It was an excellent day with some really good reports, including many people describing it as a fabulous family day out - with something for everyone, from grandparents to toddlers.

"We were complimented on setting a new standard with hundreds of happy smiling faces in the town and I don't think we could ask for more than that.

"We felt it was extremely successful all-round - footfall was up and the entertainers who took part were all top quality."

Irene Slack (2nd left) and fellow members of Team Gingerbread, Geraldene, John, Gordon and Peter, pictured during the town-centre festival.

Doorman who faked ID jailed for two years

A WEST Lancs man with a criminal past who got a job as a door supervisor by providing fake identification documents has been jailed for two years.

Jack Clegg Walsh, 29, of Cherry Tree Lane, Aughton, was working for Elite Security (NW) Ltd. at The Running Horses pub in St Helens when Security Industry Authority (SIA) investigators made routine licensing checks.

Walsh ran away when he saw the officers, but was later identified by Merseyside Police.

He pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud and one of working as an unlicensed door supervisor and was sentenced at Liverpool Crown Court.

Jack Clegg Walsh who has been jailed for two years for providing false documents to get a job in security.

Walsh had applied to work for Elite Security (NW) Ltd. under a different name and had given them falsified information. This included a licence number that was not his, an altered passport, and a photograph that matched the picture on the passport he produced.

SIA investigators conducted enquiries which confirmed that he had been refused an SIA licence on the grounds of previous criminality. Further investigation secured documents that were analysed by the National Document Fraud Unit, who concluded that the copy of the passport that Walsh had presented to his employer was falsified. This was supported by witness evidence that showed that the employment document had also been counterfeited.

Consequences

SIA investigators contacted the original licence holder, who supported the SIA as a witness, confirming that he was the genuine holder of the door supervisor licence which Jack Clegg Walsh had claimed to be his. The genuine licence has since been replaced.

The SIA says he put the public at risk. Pete Easterbrook, the SIA's Criminal Investigations Manager said: "Jack Walsh intentionally misled his employers and broke the law by working without a licence. His behaviour also constitutes fraud and he is now having to face the serious consequences of his actions. This case should serve as a reminder to the industry that the SIA will deal robustly with those who disregard the safeguards that regulation provides, and pursue any type of offending which affects our industry."

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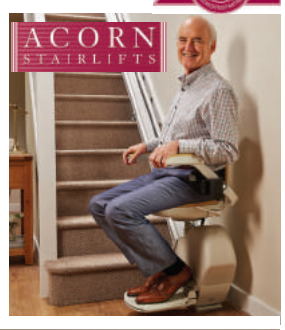

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

Residents invited to sign up to campaign for a stand-alone Skelmersdale Town Council

RESPONDING to the letter about 'forgotten Skelmersdale' in the Champion by Bill Clarke (July 11).

Dear Bill, the only way Skelmersdale could completely govern itself is if it was a unitary authority and we would have to lobby central government for that.

Skelmersdale's footprint is small, 4.3% of West Lancs, and the residents provide over 25% of the borough's council tax revenue so there would probably be considerable opposition.

However, there is a pressure group in Skelmersdale trying to raise 2,035 signatures to petition West Lancs Borough Council to trigger a Community Governance Review. The hope is they will allow the formation of a Skelmersdale Town Council.

We do not have or seek any political allegiances; we are just on a journey to improve Skelmersdale and halt its decline.

I invite you and every Skelmersdale resident to sign our petition or, if you want greater involvement, join the group, SkemNTC@outlook.com.

A. B., Skelmersdale, by email

County's council taxpayers left to foot the bill for unwanted process foisted on us by Government

THE disclosure that Lancashire council taxpayers will have to pick up the £5.6 million of the policing cost for the fracking operations at Little Plumpton not covered by central government funding will come as an unwelcome surprise.

In effect, they are being asked to fund an operation rejected by the county council but now being imposed on us by Westminster.

Time after time public opinion polls have shown that the majority of people in this country do not want fracking.

The Government's recently-announced plans to override local democracy and impose fracking represents another stage in its eclipse by a Westminster Government that puts money ahead of environmental protection.

Incidentally, does the cost of shale gas that will be recovered at Little Plumpton actually meet the £7 million cost of the police operation, let alone other operating costs?

Dr Murray Steele, Ormskirk

PICTURE of the week

Lady Lancelot thrilled visitors to last weekend's Green Fayre at Beacon Country Park when the Cavalry of Heroes team staged a spectacular display of Medieval Jousting. Picture by Martyn Snape.

Motorists should stand together over fuel prices

I WRITE in reply to the letter (Champion, July 18) about Ormskirk fuel prices.

I must agree with the writer in the respect that we (the local public) should all join force in protesting about the local prices of petrol and diesel.

I too have to shop around for competitive fuel prices outside my local area because of high prices.

We get ripped off with the local prices so it's time the motorist all stood together and boycotted the local fuel stations.

I am lucky that I pass two supermarkets on my way to work so am able to buy there.

Many others don't have that luxury and would therefore have to travel extra miles outside of their normal daily routine in order to benefit from paying extra at the pump.

It's a rip off given that crude oil prices aren't actually as high as they have been in recent years.

P. R., by email

Festival helped me appreciate our town

RECENT visitors from the south of England said they thought Ormskirk looked really welcoming.

They liked the trees, the flowers, the seating, the variety of shops, the bustling market and the spreading cafe culture giving a lively, cosmopolitan atmosphere.

I am not accustomed to hearing praise for our town. It made me look at it with fresh eyes. I can now appreciate its good points, particularly when I was walking around the delightful Gingerbread Festival.

Congratulations to all involved. By working together you have managed, in spite of austerity, to create an inviting town centre.

J. Myers, by email

Drop us a line

IF you've got a view on a topic of local or national interest which you would like to share with the readers of the Champion, why not drop us a line?

Letters to the editor should be concise, preferably no more than 350 words, and should include the sender's name, address and contact details, although not necessarily for publication.

The editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Correspondents preferring not to have their name and/or their address published may provide a suitable nom de plume.

Letters can be posted or emailed to the respective addresses listed at the top of this page.

■ PLEASE note: All views and opinions expressed in letters to the editor are solely those of the authors.

Still offering specialist support to people with Polio 79 years on

AS chairman of The British Polio Fellowship, I'm sure I speak for our 8,000 members in congratulating the NHS on 70 years.

First with Polio and now living with Post Polio Syndrome (PPS), we relied on the NHS at its beginning and now more than ever. It wasn't always this way.

Back in 1939 when our charity was founded, war had yet to start and the NHS was but a twinkle in Bevan's Nye. For nine years, we were the only body to which people with Polio could turn.

When the NHS took over in 1948, there remained a role for us to play, even when thankfully, a Polio vaccine transformed the landscape.

Our charity and the NHS have grown up together and we look upon our younger sibling's achievements with pride as we prepare to mark 80 years of our own existence January 29, 2019.

Both organisations need public support - as in a connected world where paradoxically, people are lonelier than ever - the knowledge you never walk alone when illness strikes, matters.

Having leaned on both throughout my life, I pay tribute to these great British institutions and the stalwarts who make them tick. God bless you all.

The British Polio Fellowship still helps those who need our specialist support. Call us now on 0800 043 1935 or visit www.british-polio.org.uk.

David Mitchell,
national chairman,
The British Polio Fellowship

Community must unite to tackle growing knife crime menace

I AM writing to you in sadness that in the midst of the escalation of knife crime, it's now in the Skelmersdale area.

It's a very sad day indeed when youths walk from one estate to another carrying samurai swords and knives and chasing other youths - both of which I have witnessed and not one policeman in sight!

The youths are clearly well known and all over Facebook boasting about their exploits.

Surely we all know who they are.

It baffles me that they are not tackled by parents who, I would imagine, have either lost control or are blind to the fact, before they hurt some poor unsuspecting youth.

It could be your child so let us as a community stick together and stop them.

It's not 'grassing', it's called social responsibility and good common sense.

Yours in hope.

A. K., by email

Skelmersdale is ideal site for new hospital

I HAVE never written before to a newspaper, but then again maybe I have not felt so strongly.

Why is the town of Skelmersdale forgotten in the forward planning in West Lancs? This is an ideal place to build a hospital, after all it was in the original plans.

Why build a hospital on a B road when there is so much space here in Skelmersdale with easy access to major motorways etc.? And God knows the good people of Skelmersdale would welcome the employment and investment in their town.

To me it is a no-brainer!

The people of Ormskirk are overwhelmed by the university and a wonderful market town is losing its identity.

Give Skelmersdale a chance.

Paula Fletcher, by email

The new phone service has been set up by the National Farmers Union in partnership with the Crimestoppers charity.

MP backs dedicated phone service to help stamp out rural crime

ROSIE Cooper has pledged her support for a new 'hotline' service designed to enable farmers and members of the public to give information anonymously about rural crime.

The Rural Crime Reporting Line, launched by the National Farmers' Union in partnership with the charity Crimestoppers, encourages farmers, rural businesses and the public to ring 0800 783 0137 or visit www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk to provide information anonymously about crime relating to offences such as large-scale, industrial fly-tipping, hare coursing, and machinery or livestock theft.

Rural crime is a serious issue for all who work and live in the countryside and can have significant impacts on farms and other rural business and their suppliers and customers.

West Lancs MP, Ms Cooper said: "Rural crime can have devastating impacts and I recognise that is a very important issue for many of my West Lancashire constituents.

"I fully support this new initiative by the NFU and commend them for their ongoing work to tackle these serious issues.

"I am committed to working with the NFU in our efforts to tackle rural crime and begin to rid this blight on our countryside."

NFU deputy president, Guy Smith, added: "With relevant information being passed to the police, this service could help to provide key leads in the pursuit of these criminals.

"I want to encourage anyone who has experienced, witnessed or has any information about these rural crimes to come forward and call the line - your information could be extremely valuable."

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New discharge and transfer lounge opens at Southport Hospital

A NEW discharge and transfer lounge has opened at Southport Hospital.

Bosses at the Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust say the new unit will improve patient flow, relieving pressure on A&E, improving care and the overall patient experience.

Head of patient flow, Hazel Irizar, said: "This is part of a bigger project to completely overhaul our emergency care provision. The new unit will free up space in accident and emergency, and provide a more comfortable experience for patients waiting to be discharged. The unit has three beds and a side-room, plus a seating area for up to eight mobile patients.

"The next and final stage of works will begin shortly, and this will see A&E refurbished by autumn. Additional bays, additional staff and improved triage facilities to accelerate patient hand over from ambulance crews, will create a much improved experience and environment for both patients and staff."

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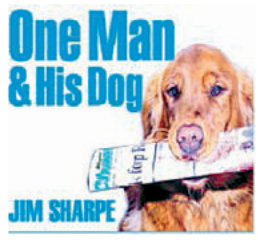
Things *aren't* what they used to be - except in the House of Commons!

'FINGS ain't wot they used to be' is a line from a now very old pop song of the late 1950s - but things are no more now what they used to be than they were then, as I realised when taking a bath today.

For years I have used Wright's Coal Tar Soap for my bathtime ablutions, I like the coal tar smell. It almost oozes disinfectant in a pleasant, homely sort of way, is long-lasting and, I thought, tried and tested over generations.



So I was delighted to be able to buy four tablets for the price of three, the orange, red and white wrapper and familiar trademark taking me back to my childhood. Imagine my disappointment when I took a closer look at this wrapping and found that the wording now says: 'Traditional Soap with coal tar fragrance'. I'm pretty sure it used to claim to actually be 'Coal Tar Soap'.

The blurb on the back of the packing also claimed: 'Wright's Traditional Soap has been a family favourite for over 130 years and has retained its natural appeal'. To be fair, I wouldn't argue with that, apart from the far less strong aroma of coal tar emanating from it once one has been alerted to have a sniff. But when you read the list of ingredients, there's no mention of 'coal tar', so I suppose the smell is, in fact, totally fake.

I will probably continue to buy Wright's Traditional soap if only because I still like the (now residual) smell and it is long lasting. But this is, I fear, just another 'not what it used to be' item only discovered because of modern regulations.

Apart from coal tar soap I have always been a sucker for chocolate peppermint creams, particularly those with dark chocolate, but here the old maxim 'you get what you pay for' is most certainly true. You can buy chocolate peppermint creams very cheaply - but beware! Those 'bargain' peppermints often contain absolutely no peppermint whatever - just 'peppermint flavouring'.

This ersatz approach extends to almost anything - from 'leather' belts and watch straps (which may or may not contain any dead cow at all) to your 'real' Omega watch for £20, waterproof to at least a splash from the washing-up bowl.

One place where things are very much what they used to be is the House of Commons.

You may have noticed that my comments on Brexit have been fairly few and far between. This is due to the rapidly changing news (if not decisions) on the European front, but also because I realise that only roughly one half and a smidgen of our population agree with me at all. But this week I really must comment briefly.

The Prime Minister now appears hell-bent on a 'pragmatic' solution to our exit deal. The last time we had a situation rather like this was back in 1939 when Neville Chamberlain thought he had secured 'Peace in our Time' through a 'pragmatic' plan - though then it was called appeasement!

In her two set piece speeches on Brexit, Mrs May appeared to be keeping all her balls in the air, and Brexiteers such as myself were reasonably happy. Now she seems to have lost whatever balls she ever had - in much the same way as Mr Chamberlain. The piece of white paper waved on his returned from his meeting with Hitler proved worthless, as will the White Paper Mrs May eventually produced after the Chequers fiasco. And if you believe as I do that the quicker we shake the mud from the EU quagmire the better, this is catastrophic.

But since her antics don't seem to have pleased the Remainers either, perhaps I should point out the disastrous, almost fatal for Great Britain, results of the last great appeasement - because this country is within an ace of becoming a vassal state of the EU and losing a golden chance of a great new age where we can all be proud of our heritage and our future.

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Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancs, Councillor Noel Delaney and Mrs Ann Stubbert opened the Show What You Grow festival where local pupils celebrated their gardening successes.

Festival celebration for budding gardeners

'Show What You Grow' event a red letter day for green-fingered pupils

GREEN-fingered youngsters from across West Lancashire celebrated their growing achievements at the annual 'Show What You Grow' festival.

More than 60 pupils from nine schools took scarecrows, school-grown produce and displays of drawings, paintings, and photos of their gardening work to the event at West Lancashire College in Skelmersdale.

The Mayor and Mayoress of West Lancashire, Councillor Noel Delaney and Mrs Ann Stubbert opened the day and the children then enthusiastically took part in activities such as making a veggie creature, an allotment quiz, and a Grow Your Own activity book.

After lunch, the children took to the stage to give presentations about their gardening clubs and the day ended with prize giving.

Skelmersdale-based business called 'All About Food' donated a prize for the Best Display of Work. The lucky winning school was Crawford Primary whose gardening club will visit All About Food's office, The Tree House, to find out more about their partnership with farmers and sustainable agriculture.

They will then be treated to lunch at Nando's as part of the prize package.

The event was organised by the Community Food Growing Project of West Lancs CVS, as part of the Active West Lancs programme, in conjunction with West Lancs Allotment Federation and West Lancashire College, and was funded by Upholland Tawd Vale Lions.

The event was also supported by the local business community. M.A Forshaw of Scarisbrick provided the vegetables and prizes were donated by Morrisons supermarket.

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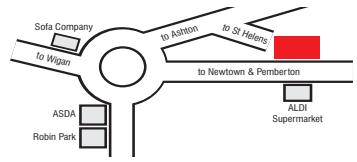

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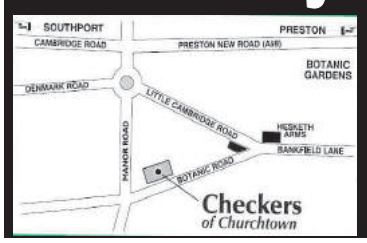

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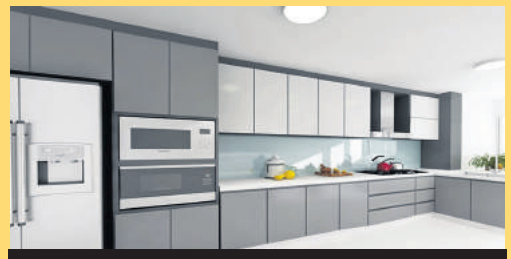

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SOUTHPORT FLOWER SHOW

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It's the biggest event in the summer calendar and this year Champion is giving away free tickets to the 2018 Southport Flower Show.
We have ten pairs of tickets to hand out to lucky readers so they can enjoy the annual seaside event free of charge.
Gardeners and amateur growers have been flocking to the show for nearly 90 years and the event is known for its fabulous displays and competitions.
Southport is the UK's largest independent flower show and features some of Britain's favourite celebrity gardeners. This year TV presenter Monty Don will open the show.
It is also a fun day out for the whole family with a packed programme of entertainment.

To be in with a chance of winning simply answer the following question:

Which celebrity will be opening the 2018 Southport Flower Show?

Send your answer on a postcard to:
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Don't forget to include your name and contact details including a daytime phone number.

Closing date for entries:
12 noon Friday 3rd August

Usual Champion rules apply. See T&Cs at www.champnews.com/comprules.
No alternative prize option available. The Editors decision is final

Care trust signs up to new Smokefree pledge

BOSSES At Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust have signed up to a new NHS Smokefree Pledge to help staff and patients alike quit smoking.

The new pledge builds further on the NHS Statement of Support for Tobacco Control that the trust signed up to in 2015.

Smokefree Action Coalition launched the NHS Smokefree Pledge earlier this year as a clear and visible way for NHS organisations to show their commitment to help smokers quit and provide smokefree environments. It has been endorsed by Public Health Minister Steve Brine and the chief executives of NHS England and Public Health England.

Medical director at Lancashire Care, Max Marshall, said: "Smoking is the leading cause of premature death and disease and kills 79,000 people in England every year. We are determined to help as many smokers to quit as possible, improving their health and reduce the smoking burden placed on the NHS.

"Whilst the trust is raising awareness of the dangers of smoking, Lancashire Care also provides support and advice for anyone who would like to take the first steps towards a smokefree future. Advisors from the trust's Quit Squad are available for friendly advice and support."

Lancashire Care's chief executive, Professor Heather Tierney-Moore, with chair, David Eva, signing the NHS Smokefree Pledge.

The Quit Squad is at hand across Lancashire to provide friendly advice for anyone who would like to quit smoking for good. The service Squad can be contacted by calling Freephone 0800328 6297 or visiting www.quitsquad.nhs.uk for further information and to access the online self-referral form.

Venues urged to join Breasteeding Friendly scheme

HEALTH professionals from Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust are encouraging community venues to sign up to their Breastfeeding Friendly Places scheme to support mums who breastfeed.

The trust's Infant Feeding Team is encouraging public venues to help facilitate greater acceptance and increase the number of babies who are breastfed and breastfed for longer.

Katie Wharton, Infant Feeding co-ordinator, said: By signing up to the scheme, businesses are pledging their support to provide an environment that welcomes breastfeeding.

"Currently, we hear that one of the reasons some mums choose not to breastfeed for as long as they would like to is that they feel uncomfortable and are made to feel unwelcome when out in public, and we hope that when people sign up to the scheme this will no longer be the case."

Organisations wishing to sign up to the scheme can visit www.lancashirecare.nhs.uk/IF or email the Infant Feeding Team on infant.feeding@lancashirecare.nhs.uk.

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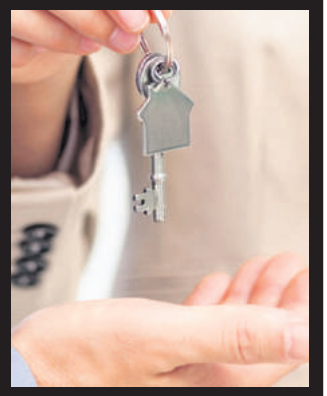

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Local businesses among county's 'Hot 100' top-performing SMEs

Report by **Kenny Parker**

TEN companies in West Lancashire have been named among the county's 100 most profitable Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SMEs) in an annual survey.

Officials at Lancashire Business View magazine say its Hot 100 list of the top-performing SMEs has revealed continued confidence within the sector - despite Brexit and global and domestic political uncertainty.

Highest-placed of the West Lancs companies in fifth is Direct Accident Management of Ormskirk which deals with vehicle repairs for people involved in road accidents that weren't their fault.

The company, which employs 160 people, had an annual turnover of £17.98m resulting in a pre-tax profit of £4.52m.

Also in the top 20 were Skelmersdale-based drainage company Aqua Fabrications in 14th and Ormskirk landscapers J. Mallinson (19th).

Aqua, which employs 48 people, recorded a turnover of £13.9m and pre-tax profits of £2.78m; and Mallinson's with 43 staff had a turnover of £14.42m with £2.56m pre-tax profit.

Business leaders gather to celebrate the release of Lancashire Business View's 'Hot 100' list of the county's top-performing Small and Medium-sized enterprises.

Other companies in the borough on the list were Sustainable Building Services and One Stop Hire, both of Skelmersdale, in 54th and 55th places respectively; Ormskirk-based Distant Journeys (61st) and fashion company, Portfolio of Appley Bridge (64th).

Three more Skelmersdale companies - Hills Salvage & Recycling (82nd); Innox Trading (94th) and Lifting Gear UK Group (99th) - also featured.

The only downward trend highlighted in the survey was a small fall in jobs from 10,209 last year to 9,820.

The Hot 100 list is compiled with Lancashire-based chartered accountants Haworths and this year was sponsored by Edge Hill University and HSBC.

Lancashire Business View publisher, Richard Slater, said: "Once again the Hot 100 puts the focus firmly on the many success stories we have here in the county and underlines the resilience and determination of our vitally important SMEs.

"These are the businesses that drive Lancashire's economy, delivering jobs and opportunities to their communities. They are the backbone of the county."

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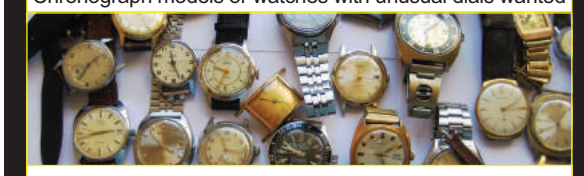

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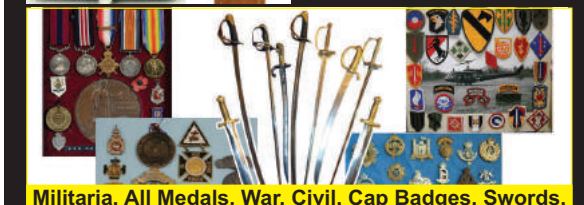

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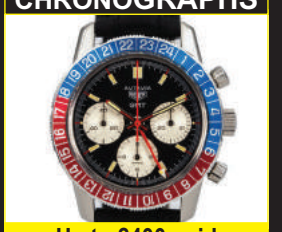

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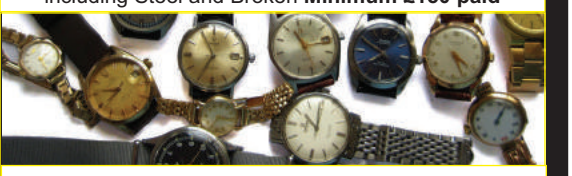

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Beware dangers of swimming in quarries and lakes

WITH the long school summer holidays about to start and the recent hot weather forecast to continue, a safety campaign has been launched to warn youngsters of the dangers of swimming in quarries, lakes and other open-water sites.

Soaring temperatures and the chance to 'cool off' with a refreshing dip might seem attractive, but a combination of icy cold water, submerged currents or hazards and steep-sided quarries can be fatal for unsuspecting swimmers.

Elizabeth Clements from the Mineral Products Association (MPA), which represents quarry owners, said: "All too often, tragedies occur when people are engaged in what they perceive as harmless fun, either cooling off in the water or playing near the water's edge.

"Man-made water bodies like quarry lakes and reservoirs can be extremely deep, have sudden changes in water depth, be difficult to exit and conceal a range of hazards such as pumps, entangling weeds, rocks and old machinery.

"Quarry faces and edges can be unstable and suddenly give way, resulting in falls into water and also making it more difficult to get oneself back onto dry land.

Disorientated

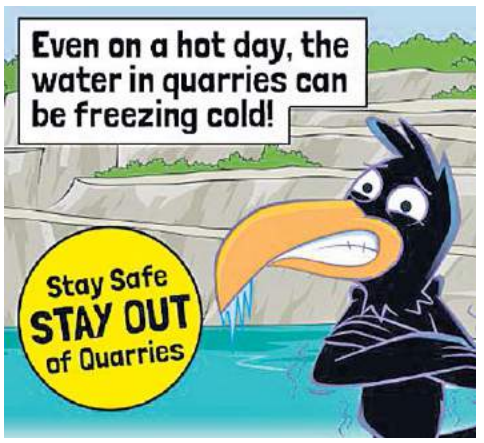
"The water in quarry lakes and reservoirs can also be extremely cold, even after a long hot spell. At 15C and below, the body can experience cold water shock when immersed in water, this results in a sudden, involuntary inhalation of water into the lungs which can be deadly.

"The cold water can also cause even strong swimmers to tire quickly, become breathless and potentially disorientated.

"Statistics show that nearly half the accidental drownings occur following an unexpected fall into water. Cold water shock is a significant factor in many of these deaths. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution is recommending that someone plunged into water initially floats on their back, allowing their body to acclimatise and providing time to calm down before attempting to exit the water.

"The MPA is supporting the water safety campaigns being run by the RNLI and other organisations such as the Royal Life Saving Society and the Fire and Rescue Services 'Be Water Aware' campaign. Collectively, we do not want to discourage members of the public from enjoying the water but would like people to be aware of the risks and choose to swim in areas that are safe.

"To find out more, view the MPA campaign Facebook page Stay Safe Stay Out of Quarries or the RNLI website www.respectthewater.com. Please remember that warning signs and fences are there to help protect you and your family."



The poster for the MPA campaign.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

DON'T LET WORRIES ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA PHOTOS SPOIL SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Ormskirk slimming expert, Tina Whewell, says anyone unhappy with their weight needn't miss out on living the life they want to live , after new research* found that the fear of being tagged in unflattering social media photos ruins special occasions.

The study conducted by Slimming World found nights out with friends, weddings and trips to the beach are the most commonly spoiled occasions because of social media photo fears and the worries are particularly strong for people who are unhappy with their weight.

However, Tina says that while social media can be a source of worry for many, it can also be an inspiration for people on a weight loss programme, as the research shows that seven in ten slimmers are inspired by social media on their weight loss journey. Furthermore, 93% said the support they get on social media complements the face-to-face support they get from their weight loss group and 87% said social media actually helped them to lose weight.

Slimming World Consultant Tina, says: " I know how not being comfortable with your weight can take over your life. In the past I've felt anxious and uneasy when someone has taken out their phone on a night out, I've felt uncomfortable getting the camera out on holiday, and I've even spent important family occasions worrying about people's photographs of me appearing online afterwards. Nowadays with smartphone cameras and social media networks, every day seems to bring numerous photo opportunities, so it's easy to see why some people don't feel comfortable attending special events because of worries about their picture appearing online.

"I don't want anyone in West Lancashire to feel like they have to miss out on special occasions they might never get back because they're unhappy with how they look. Lot's of my members tell me that losing weight has improved their confidence and self-esteem ten-fold, many now tell me they love being in front of the camera. And being part of a positive supportive group like Slimming World means that sharing recipes, tips and motivational transformations on social media becomes an extension of that support. Posts showing how members are getting on, the delicious, tasty Free Food meals they're eating and how they're becoming more active help them to inspire and be inspired by each other."

Slimming World member Sarah Goldsmith says: "Before losing weight I hated seeing photos of myself online. I dreaded every 'you've been tagged in a photo' notification after a night out or family event. Thanks to Tina and my fellow group members I'm now full of confidence – both in the real world and online! As well as going to group each week, social media now really inspires and encourages me along my journey. I love seeing other people's transformations and getting ideas for recipes to try. I am also part of our group's Facebook page – it means we can support each other in between our weekly meetings. I love seeing everyone else achieve their weight loss dreams just as much as my own!"

"I'd encourage anyone in West Lancashire to not let social media worries stop them from living their best life, or from achieving their goals and dreams, and to instead be confident and proud online. And if their goals include losing weight, they'll always get a warm welcome from me and the members of my local Slimming World group."

To find out more about Slimming World see details of your local group in the advertisement or just pop along to any group - a warm welcome awaits.

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ASHURST, SKELMERSDALE
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Sue: 01695 420 305

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6.30pm
Michelle: 07931 125172

OLD ROAN
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Victoria: 07766 136641

OLD ROAN
The Hope Centre (behind Tesco), Aintree Lane
5pm & 7pm
Victoria: 07766 136641

OLD SKELMERSDALE
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Paula: 07484 263698

TUESDAY

OLD SKELMERSDALE
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Tina: 0151 548 4266

ORMSKIRK
Ormskirk Rugby Club, Green Lane
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4.30 & 6.30pm
Emma: 07414 223 617

UP HOLLAND
Up Holland Methodist Church, Alma Hill
9.30am
Sarah: 07969 395302

UP HOLLAND
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DIGMOOR, SKELMERSDALE
Digmoor Community Centre, Birleywood
9.30am & 11.30am
Jackie: 07888 830892

DIGMOOR, SKELMERSDALE
Digmoor Community Centre, Birleywood
4.30pm & 6.30pm
Sarah: 07792 146342

FRIDAY

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New Pavilion
Ormskirk Cricket Club
Altys Lane
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Zoe: 01695 580966

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9:30am & 11:30am
Sue: 07957 531346

SATURDAY

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Greenhill Community Room
Beech Close (Off Lancaster Cres)
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Sarah: 07969 395302

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Missed call scam warning to mobile phone users

A WEST Lancs farm worker is warning other mobile phone users of a scam that could land them with a hefty bill after he was charged more than £4 per minute for contacting a missed caller.

Richard Rimmer from Scarisbrick received 69 missed calls over a two-day period and when he tried to phone two of the numbers back to find out who they were he was charged premium rate.

One of the numbers with a +24 prefix (code for Seychelles) was charged at £1.66 per minute and the other number which had a +88 prefix (code for Taiwan) was charged at £4.16 per minute.

Richard was charged £28 by his provider EE for the brief calls he made. Thankfully after being contacted by the Champion, EE has said it will refund him the money.

It is believed that the 44-year-old was the victim of a scam known as wangiri, which originated in Japan. Wangiri is Japanese for 'one [ring] and cut'. Scammers rely on mobile phone users naturally ringing callers back when they receive a missed call and lines are then unsuspectingly transferred to a premium rate line.

A spokesperson for EE said: "We ask that customers contact their operator and Action Fraud immediately if they think they have been victims of fraud. We actively block all numbers we believe to be involved in this type of fraud, and block new numbers as soon as we're aware of them.

"We also urge everyone to be cautious when calling back unknown callers, especially from the 0843 and 0845 number ranges. This is an industry-wide issue and we are working with other operators to help prevent this type of fraud."

Advice to avoid being scammed by a wangiri fraudster is not to answer or call back a missed call from an overseas number unless you know who it is from; inform your operator of any suspicious looking numbers you miss calls from; and use an app that filters out unwanted calls and text messages.

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Water company denies failing to record floods

Report by **Kenny Parker**

UNITED Utilities has denied claims that it failed to accurately report the number of flooding issues in the Burscough area during the Boxing Day Floods of 2015 in an ongoing war of words with local campaigners.

At a presentation at the Briars Hall Hotel, the water company revealed it was downgrading the level of flood protection in the village as it suffers just a third of the national average of floods.

However, Gavin Rattray, secretary of Burscough Flooding Group, said that maps presented by the company substantially under-represented the level of flooding compared to what the group discovered in a report commissioned by Burscough Parish Council in 2016.

In particular, he maintained that United Utilities had not reported on numerous incidents during the Boxing Day storm of 2015 saying the company set up a pre-recorded telephone message for more than a week directing all but internal sewer flooding calls to other agencies.

In response United Utilities stated: "The root cause of flooding can be extremely complex and it does not help when false allegations are made about incorrect reporting and phone lines being switched off.

"When flooding is reported and investigated by United Utilities we have sufficient assurance processes in place to ensure that our records on how flooding is recorded is both reliable and accurate.

"Our business operates 24/7 and we do not turn off our phones. We unsurprisingly had a large number of calls during the exceptional weather on Boxing Day 2015, and there were delays in answering some of them. But if a customer had stayed on hold, they would have got through.

"We are committed to working with all agencies involved in helping to minimise the risk of flooding in the area. We are looking at short-term and long-term plans to identify any potential improvements we can make on our network, along with increasing our customer engagement activities to highlight the issue of blockages being caused by wipes, fats/oils, grease, being discharged into the sewer network."

Flooding at Furnival Drive in Burscough on Boxing Day 2015.

Specialist physio Melanie makes annual visit to Breathe Easy group

MELANIE Reardon, specialist physiotherapist with the Southport and Ormskirk NHS Hospital Trust, was guest speaker at the latest meeting of the West Lancashire and Southport Breathe Easy group held at the Girl Guide HQ in Green Lane, Ormskirk.

Once again the meeting was opened with a half-hour, lung-exercising singalong, led by local duo, Power of Music.

Melanie, who is involved with delivering pulmonary and cardiac rehabilitation, along with rehabilitation for cancer patients (the latter through Macmillan Nurses), visits the group each year. Her talks are always popular and this time she was accompanied by student Linda Kenyon.

Melanie with Harry Thacker from the Breathe Easy group

Patricia Ireland, from Breathe Easy group, said: "Melanie outlined to us the many benefits of pulmonary rehabilitation, which is available in both Southport, at the Lakeside Centre, and at Ormskirk Hospital. We are extremely fortunate to have this facility in both towns and patients can be referred for a course by their GP, or they can self-refer.

"She also spoke about breathlessness and how we can get the best out of our GP service. And also about various inhalers and other equipment which can help us, such as a power-breather.

"We would like to thank Melanie for making time to come to speak to us and, as always, her visit was hugely appreciated."

The group's next meeting will be held on Monday, August 20 at the usual venue. For further information contact Trish on 07528 702 203.

County council hosts information evening for potential foster carers

LANCASHIRE County Council is holding an information evening for people thinking about becoming foster carers tonight (Wednesday, July 25).

The event will run from 6 to 7.30pm at County Hall, Fishergate Hill, Preston and members of the council's fostering team, as well as social workers and current foster carers, will be available to answer questions and offer advice.

The county council has recently increased allowances payable to new foster carers and people who have considered fostering before, but weren't sure they could afford it, are advised to go along to find out if it could now be a viable option.

County Councillor Susie Charles, cabinet member for children, young people and schools, said: "We are looking for people who can foster all ages of children, particularly siblings who need to stay together, and teenagers. No formal experience or qualifications are needed, all we ask is that you have a spare room available and a desire to make a difference to a local child's life."

A package of support is available 24/7 to help foster carers, including local support groups, their own social worker, a dedicated helpline and flexible training.

There is no need to book - just turn up. Free parking is available and there is disabled access.

Anyone interested but unable to attend can call the fostering recruitment team on 0300 123 6723 or visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/fostering.

New councillor for Hesketh-with-Becconsall

CONSERVATIVE Joan Witter has been voted the new councillor for the Hesketh-with-Becconsall ward of West Lancashire Borough Council following the by-election on Thursday, July 19.

In the poll, held to find a successor to former Conservative councillor Paul Moon who stood down from the role due to a "personal and private matter", Ms Witter triumphed with 510 votes ahead of Labour's Nick Kemp (431 votes) and independent Steve Kirby (295 votes).

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'Canal laureate' seeks poetic inspiration in Burscough!

THE Canal and River Trust's 'canal laureate' has been paddling through West Lancs in search of inspiration!

Poet Nancy Campbell has been appointed by The Poetry Society and the trust to write new works inspired by the country's canal network.

And as part of her poetic mission she has travelled the 126 miles of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal by kayak stopping off at various villages, towns and cities along the way to read poetry and engage with members of the local community.

During her voyage through Burscough Nancy stopped off at The Slipway pub in Crabtree Lane where she was welcomed by manageress, Sonia Swarbrick.

The poems that Nancy writes as a result of any inspiration she finds during her travels will be published on the Waterlines canal and river poetry website at https://waterlines.org.uk/canal-laureate/.

Hosepipe ban could come into force if no 'sustained' rainfall

A HOSEPIPE ban could be imposed in the region next month as a result of the continuing hot weather.

United Utilities have said the ban will come into force on Sunday, August 5 to help "safeguard essential water supplies for longer".

The ban will apply to domestic customers who get their water supply from the company.

Water services director, Martin Padley, said: "Despite some recent rainfall, reservoir levels are still lower than we would expect at this time of year and with forecasters predicting a return to hot dry weather, we are now at a point where we will need to impose some temporary restrictions on customers.

"It is not a decision we have taken lightly and we are enormously grateful to customers for having helped reduce the demand on our network over the last couple of weeks, but unless we get a period of sustained rainfall before August 5 these restrictions will help us safeguard essential water supplies for longer."

Campaign

While the ban restricts the use of hosepipes or sprinklers for watering private gardens and washing private cars, customers will still be able to water their gardens with a watering can and wash their vehicles using a bucket and sponge. These methods typically use a fraction of the amount of water a hosepipe or sprinkler uses.

United Utilities say the move will complement the company's continuing efforts to "maintain essential supplies", including maximising abstraction from ground water supplies, moving water around its regional integrated network of pipes and running an extensive campaign to encourage customers to use water wisely.

People who do not adhere to the ban could face fines of up to £1,000.

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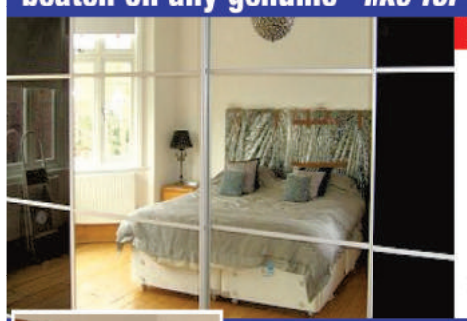

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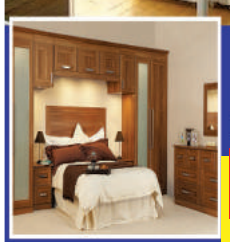

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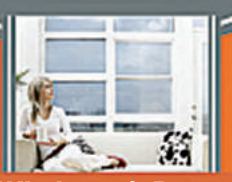

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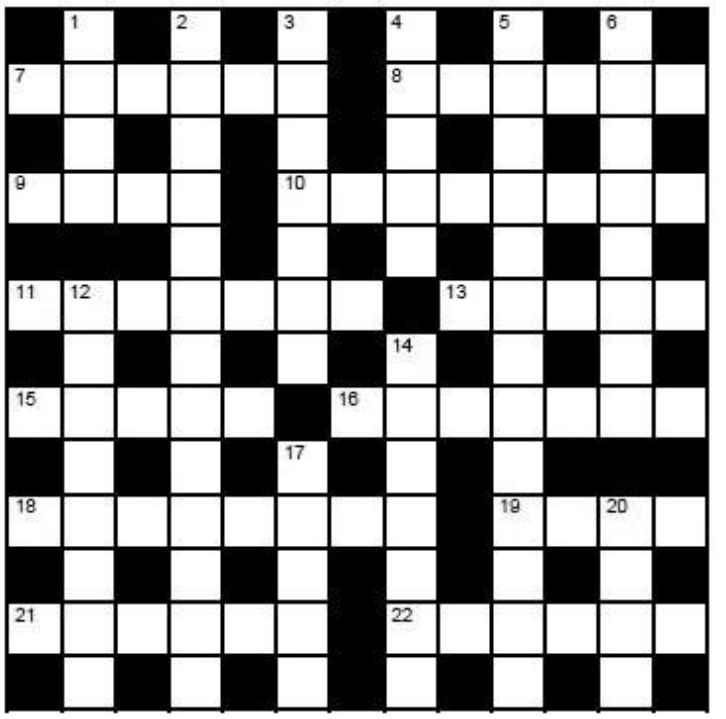

Last week's solutions:
Across: 7. Interrogatory. 8. Two-piece. 9. Rift. 10. Hostile. 12. Eyrie. 14. Beige. 16. Bumpkin. 19. Sloe. 20. Uncle Sam. 22 Power steering.
Down: 1. Know. 2. Despot. 3. Orderly. 4. Egret. 5. Sturdy. 6. Graffiti. 11. Overlook. 13. Butcher. 15. Geezer. 17. Poetry. 18. Gutsy. 21. Aunt.

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ACROSS

7. An athlete or a type of bean (6)
8. Calamitous, sorrowful (6)
9. Give up power or territory (4)
10. Person responsible for the financial and managerial aspects of making a film (8)
11. Radio programme where listeners call the studio to take part (5-2)
13. Ballroom dance (5)
15. Foam (5)
16. Turbulent stretch of strongly moving sea water where two or more currents meet (7)
18. In conflict or competition with (8)
19. Get out of bed (4)
21. Drug derived from opium (6)
22. In the Roman Catholic Church a papal ambassador (6)

DOWN

1. Highest hereditary title in the British peerage (4)
2. Sporting contest between countries (13)
3. Item or service for which payment is made in advance (7)
4. A seat without a back or arms, typically resting on three or four legs or a single pedestal (5)
5. Making of articles on a large scale using machinery (13)
6. Changed course (8)
12. Lively dance associated with sailors (8)
14. Making musical sounds with the voice (7)
17. Assorted, varied (5)
20. Piece of material extended on a mast to catch the wind and propel a vessel (4)

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A scene from Crooners

Win tickets to see Crooners at theatre

PEOPLE are being invited to head down to Southport Theatre on Friday August 24 at 7.30pm for a new laugh out loud comedy musical, called Crooners, that will have audiences laughing, singing, dancing and smiling from ear to ear.

The Champion is offering readers the chance to win tickets for the night.

Featuring the outstanding and uncompromising live, on stage musicianship of the nine-piece band The Mini Big Band, the show will feature songs from Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr, Matt Monro, Nat King Cole and Bobby Darin.

Expect to hear the Lady is a Tramp, Come Fly With Me, L.O.V.E, When You're Smiling, Fly Me To The Moon, Beyond The Sea, Mac The Knife and many more.

Add an injection of British comedy, tongue firmly in cheek, and this two-hour comedy musical will be sure to entertain audiences.

For more information or to book tickets, visit the Box Office Mon-Sat 11am-4pm, call 0844 871 3021 or visit www.atgtickets.com/southport

To be in with a chance of winning tickets, answer the following question. What date is the show Crooners on at the Southport Theatre? Answers to Champion Newspapers, Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport, PR9 OQA. Please supply your address and a contact number. The closing date is Friday, August 17 at 12 noon.

Actress made patron of Opera Viva

OPERA Viva has announced that the popular actress, Alison Steadman, has been appointed as Patron of the Charity.

Alison began her distinguished career at the Liverpool Everyman Theatre and recently attended Opera Viva's 'Roaring Twenties' concert in South Liverpool as part of the Halewood Culture Fest.

This delighted Alison and a most appreciative full house, with music ranging from Cabaret to Musical, and ended the evening with thrilling performances of In Questa Regia and Nessun Dorma from Puccini.

Alison wrote: "I am delighted to support Opera Viva."

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Light railway on track for gala weekend

RAILWAY enthusiasts have a chance to let off some steam as West Lancashire Light Railway (WLLR) announces the dates for its annual Summer Steam Gala Weekend.

WLLR, based on Station Road, Hesketh Bank, which celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, will hold the gala event on Saturday August 11 and Sunday August 12, between 11.30 am and 4.30pm both days.

The 393 metre railway was started in September 1967.

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Fri 30 Nov	Frankie Valli/Cliff Richard	£99	£119
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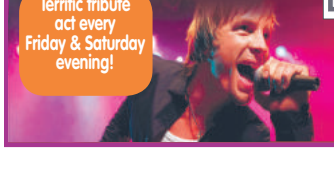
Fri 14 Dec	Elvis/Tom Jones	£99	£119

Scarborough — Grand Hotel

Tribute		2NTS	3NTS
Fri 5 Oct	Freddie Mercury/Robbie Williams	£89.95	£119.95
Fri 19 Oct	Tom Jones/Elvis	£89.95	£119.95
Fri 9 Nov	Rod Stewart/Elton John	£89.95	£119.95
Fri 23 Nov	Lionel Richie/Diana Ross	£89.95	£119.95
Fri 7 Dec	Dolly Parton/Johnny Cash	£89.95	£119.95
Fri 14 Dec	Robbie Williams/Freddie Mercury	£79.95	£109.95

Blackpool — Savoy Hotel

Tribute		2NTS
Fri 5 Oct	Tom Jones/Elvis	£89.95
Fri 19 Oct	Johnny Cash/Dolly Parton	£89.95
Fri 2 Nov	Lionel Richie/Diana Ross	£89.95
Fri 16 Nov	Elton John/Rod Stewart	£89.95
Fri 30 Nov	Abba (duo)/Kylie Minogue	£89.95
Fri 14 Dec	Freddie Mercury/Robbie Williams	£79.95



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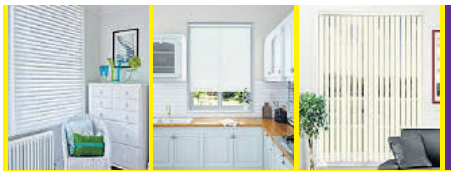

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TROUSER PRESS Murphy Richards trouser Press good condition hardly used anymore ,£25, buyer collects 07823884687

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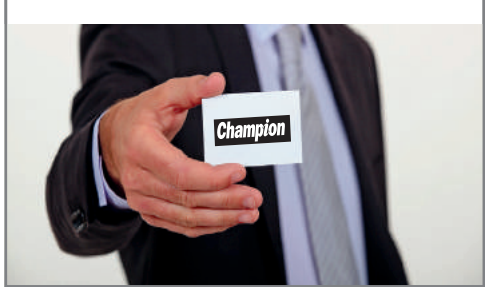

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Announcements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CUNNINGHAM WILLIAM

Bill's family would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their warm messages of support and sympathy.
Special thanks to Celebrant Carol Edwards for the beautiful service and to Dean Brothers for their dignified services.
Sincere and grateful thanks to all who donated to 'Queenscourt Hospice' in memory of Bill.

O'CALLAGHAN FATHER MORTIMER MATTHEW (MATTIE)

The Family would like to express their sincere thanks to all relatives friends and neighbours for all their sympathy cards, messages of condolence and donations for Queenscourt Hospice received during their recent sad loss. Thanks also to Archbishop Malcom, Bishop Tom and all the priests who concelebrated at the Vigil and Requiem masses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

McCAIG SYDNEY

Edie, Gill and Tony would like to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their kind messages of sympathy, kindness, support and donations received for Queenscourt Hospice during the recent sad loss of Sydney.
Special thanks to all the staff at ward 7A Southport hospital who took wonderful care of him throughout his time there, Cardiac Nurse Amanda and the Palliative Care Team, Eleanor West of St.Paul's Church for a lovely service and to Margaret, Linda and their team of Skelmersdale Funeral Service for dignified funeral service.

ADAMS SUE

Jonny and Brenda, wish to thank all relatives, friends and neighbours for their very kind thoughts of sympathy, cards and donations for Aintree University Hospital Intensive Care Unit, received in their recent sad loss.
Special thanks to John Milton for his kind ministrations.
And grateful thanks to Michelle and Michael of M. Rushton Funeral Directors for their help, support and dignified funeral arrangements.

To place a family **announcement** please call one of our team on **01704 392392** or visit **champnews.com**

KATHRYN OWE (NEE MILLIGAN)

09.07.84 - 13.07.18

The family would like to convey their sincere thanks to all relatives and friends for their kind expressions of sympathy and prayers, together with the most generous donations to the Pearl of Africa Child Care Ltd.
Special thanks are wholeheartedly sent to The Walton Centre; Clatterbridge Oncology; Queens Court Hospice and the Aughton District Nursing team for their dedicated care and consideration. Also, we are most grateful to the caring community of Christ Church for the kindness and love shown to Kathryn and for the service of celebration and thanksgiving for her wonderful life.

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IN MEMORIAM

RIGBY
JAMIE
'OUR JAY'
27/7/2004
14 long years

No farewells were spoken,
We did not say goodbye,
You were gone before we knew it,
And only God knows why.
Wishing today like we did before,
That God would have spared you many years more.
We have our precious memories,
They make us laugh and cry,
The love still planted in our hearts,
No millionaire could buy.
But you are always with us Jay,
Wherever we may be.
Your beautiful face shines down on us, and that is what we see.

Love and miss you always
'Our Jay'
(now also reunited with little mate Taz)

Broken hearted
Mum, Dad,
Danielle and Liam,
Stuart and family
xxxx

'Blowing kisses to Heaven'
From Ava Emily,
Iyla Beau, Poppy Jai
and Maggie May
xxxx

RIGBY
JAMIE

You are always in our hearts and thoughts Jamie,
Remembering happy times we shared.
We love and miss you.
Your forever friends.
Joan, Jimmy, Jo and Jay
xxxx

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IN MEMORIAM

FINEGAN
JOHN

24th July 2009
9 years today

Never a day goes by when we don't talk about you,
Tears and laughter, greatly missed.

Love from your Wife Wendy and Michelle, Eugene, Hannah and Ryan

xxxx

RIDING
HELEN
In Memoriam
25/07/2013

Five years have passed since you left us all and still you are loved and missed so much. Night, God bless kid.

Robby xxxxx

RIDING
HELEN
In Memoriam
25th July 2013

These last 5 years without you in our life.

We've miss our friend, nan, mum and wife.

Even thought we've not seen you in a while.

Thinking about you always makes us smile.

Love and miss you always.
Jeff xxxxx

RIDING
HELEN
In Memoriam
25-07-2013

Still hurting every day without you in our lives.
But we get comfort in thinking of you watching by our sides.
Watching the kids grow and play and watching me and Amy trying our best at being mum and dad from day to day.
Love and miss you Mum.
Love from son Robby, Amy, Joe and Eva.
xxxxx

DEATHS

HUNTER
BERNARD
CLIFFORD
(CLIFF)

Passed away peacefully in Hospital on
30th June 2018
Fortified by the Rites of The Holy Church.
R.I.P.

Beloved Husband of Sylvia. Loving Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather.

Requiem Mass at Holy Family Church, Southport, on Monday 30th July at 12:00 noon, followed by interment at Duke Street Cemetery. Family flowers only please by request, donations if so desired for Friends of Holy Family Church, Southport. Donations and further enquiries please to Anabel Hunter, MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a Liverpool Road North, Burscough, Lancashire, L40 9QG. Tel: 01704 891555.

STRINGFELLOW
DENIS

14th July 2018
Denis passed away peacefully age 86 Years

Denis will be sadly missed by his Wife Joan. Children Stephen, Trevor, Karen and Spouses, Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren, family, friends and all who knew him. Requiem Mass to take place at Our Lady Help Of Christians Catholic Church, Hesketh Lane, Tarleton on Thursday 26th July 2018 at 11:30am, followed by Burial at St Marys Churchyard, Tarleton. Flowers or donations if so desired to Hesketh Bank and Tarleton Corinthian Football Clubs

Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, PR4 6RJ. 01772 811165

DEATHS

GAUL
AVRIL

On 6th July 2018
Peacefully in hospital with her family around her
Aged 83 years

Beloved Wife of Eddie, loving Mum of John, Phillip, David, Michael and Andrew, dear Mother-In-Law of Louise, Jacqui and Susanne, much loved Grandmother of Michelle, Oliver and Jess and great Grandmother of Elliott. Eddie and family would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Birch Abbey Nursing Home for their tender loving care given to Avril over the past 2 1/4 years, also the staff of Ward 9B SDGH for caring for Avril in her final days.
Funeral Mass will take place at St John Stone RC Church on Friday 27th July at 11:30am, followed by the committal at Southport Crematorium. Family flowers only by request, donations if so desired for Parkinson's UK. Further enquiries please to M. Rushton Funeral Directors, 100 Marshside Road, Southport, PR9 9TG. Tel. 01704 214118.

BEVAN
DAVID
CHRISTOPHER
(BILLY)

12th July 2018
Peacefully at his home in Skelmersdale aged 60 years

He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.
All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick.
Tel:01695 722122/720012

Announcements

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DEATHS

RIMMER BARBARA
(nee Eastwood)

15th July 2018
Suddenly but peacefully in hospital
aged 72 years

Loving Wife of the late Alan, devoted Mum of Michelle, Jane, Catherine and Lyndsay and a cherished Nanna of all her Grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire crematorium today (Wednesday 25th) at 10.45am. Family flowers only please by request. Donations if desired for Dementia UK. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service
29/31 Sandy Lane
Tel: 01695 559868

MASON WINIFRED

16th July 2018
Peacefully in hospital
aged 88 years

Loving Wife of the late John, devoted Mum of Denise and John. Cherished Nan of Sara, Connor (deceased) and Liam and Great Nan of Callum. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium today (Wednesday 25th) at 1.45pm. Family flowers only please by request. Donations if desired for NW Air Ambulance. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam Skelmersdale Funeral Service
29/31 Sandy Lane
Tel:01695 559868

DEATHS

ORRITT FLORENCE ELIZABETH

Passed away peacefully
18th July 2018
aged 92 years
of Southport

Dearly Loved Mum of Paul and Phillip, Much Loved Nanna of Rachael and Natalie. Funeral Service at Southport Crematorium on Wednesday 1st August 2018 at 12 noon. Family flowers only please by request but donations are being gratefully received for Pinfold Primary School. Donations and further enquiries please to MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a Liverpool Rd North, Burscough. Tel: 01704 891555.

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BLACKWOOD ANGELA

13th July 2018
Passed away suddenly but peacefully
aged 69 years
of Parbold

Loving Mum of Stuart and Adele. Funeral Service took place at West Lancashire Crematorium, Burscough on Tuesday 24th July. There were family flowers only but donations are being gratefully received for The Donkey Sanctuary. Donations and further enquiries please to Sally Hunter MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 22a Liverpool Rd North, Burscough, L40 5TP.
Tel: 01704 891555

DEATHS

SHARPLES DEREK

19th July 2018
Aged 76 years

Died suddenly after a short illness. Beloved Husband of Helen, dearly loved Dad of Sally, John, Robert, Emma and the late Richard and dear Father-in-law of Barry. Loving Grandad of William and Rachel. Derek will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Service at St Cuthbert's Parish Church, Churchtown on Thursday 2nd August at 1:30pm followed by committal at Southport Crematorium. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations are being gratefully received for The Salvation Army. Donations and enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

HARRISON LESLIE

July 19th 2018
(Fell "Asleep In Christ" Absent from the body present with The Lord)

Reunited with his much loved Wife Joan. Dear Uncle to all his Nieces and Nephews. Les will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Celebration of his life at Bank Hall Mission Bootle on Monday July 30th 2018 at 11.15am. Followed by Interment at Thornton Garden of Rest. Flowers and enquiries to H.Leslie Humpreys 69 Liverpool Road, Crosby L23 5SE
Tel: 0151 924 4805

RAMSAY HILDA

17th July 2018
Peacefully in hospital
aged 98 years
of Shevington, formerly of Clayton St, Skelmersdale.

She will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick.
Tel: 01695 722122/720012

DEATHS

BROOKES JOYCE ANN ("OUR JOYCE")

passed away on
Tuesday 17th July 2018 after much suffering but with tender family care at home.

Dearly loved Wife and soulmate of David. Loving and devoted Mum of Helen and James. Much respected 'Mum' of Son-In-Laws Simon and Chris. Much loved Grandma to Cailan. Joyce's funeral service will take place at Tarleton Holy Trinity Church, Church Road, Tarleton at 12:30pm on Wednesday 25th July followed by internment at Chorley Cemetery, Southport Road, Chorley. Everyone welcome for refreshments which will be served at Tarleton Bowling Club, Sutton Lane, Tarleton. Family flowers only. Donations welcome to Queenscourt Hospice, Southport to help them continue to provide their excellent care to others as they did to Joyce.

Further enquiries to Newland and Wilkinson Independent Funeral Directors, 311 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, PR4 6RJ. Telephone 01772 811165

DEATHS

MEAKIN ANN (Nee McLoughlin)

Ann passed away peacefully on 11th July 2018 at her home in Lincolnshire
RIP

Cremation to take place at 11am on 31st July at Alford, Lincs.

DEATHS

SEDDON ROBERT

Passed away peacefully on the 8th July 2018 aged 88 years

Robbie's family would like to thank family and friends for all their kind messages and support at this difficult time.
A special thanks to the staff at Hillcroft Care Home for the care and dedication to Robbie during his final days.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

West Lancashire Borough Council
Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15
APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

2018/0290/FUL Proposed siting of 20 additional timber holiday lodges within the confines of Abbey Farm Caravan Park together with landscaping at Abbey Farm Caravan Park, Abbey Lane, Lathom.
The application affects a Listed Building.
2018/0548/FUL Removal of 1no. ATM and installation of timber panel to match the existing elevation. Nightsafe is also to be removed, and aperture infilled with stonework to match the existing at The Royal Bank Of Scotland, 24 - 26 Derby Street, Ormskirk.
The application affects a Conservation Area.
2018/0723/FUL Second floor loft conversion with dormer to rear at 18 Brandreth Delph, Parbold.
The application affects a Conservation Area.
2018/0728/FUL Construction of seven residential dwellings following the demolition of the existing commercial premises and a single dwelling at Hughes Mushroom Farm, Course Lane, Newburgh.
2018/0745/FUL Front single storey infill extension between existing double garage and existing house at 11 Whitefield Close, Rufford.
The application affects a Conservation Area.
The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e.mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 21 days of the date of this notice quoting the application number.
Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development
In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.
How information about you will be used
The personal data you provide will be used as part of the Council's statutory planning duties in processing planning and related applications. Some of the personal information you provide will be published. For further information about this notice or how we use your personal data please see: http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning/planning-privacy-notices/level-2-development-management-cil-privacy-notice.aspx and http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/about-the-council/legal-statements-and-foi/privacy-and-data-protection-gdpr.aspx. Hard copies are available on request.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI Director of Development and Regeneration
Dated: 25th July 2018
PDNOT1004

LICENSING ACT 2003
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR NEW APPLICATION OF PREMISES LICENCE

We, The Timber Yard of Moorgate, Ormskirk L39 4RX, have applied to West Lancashire Borough Council for a new application of premises licence, the following has been applied for:
Hours of operation: 11.00am - 00.00am (midnight) and to add the following licensable activities: Alcohol (11.30am - 23.30pm); Recorded Music (11.00am - 00.00am (midnight)); Live Music (12.00pm (midday) - 22.00pm).
The application may be inspected at West Lancashire Borough Council, Licensing Section, Robert Hodge Centre, Stanley Way, Skelmersdale, WN8 8EE, between the hours of 9.00am and 4.30pm on Monday to Friday inclusive. Brief details can be also obtained from the Council's website http://www.westlancsgov.uk/licensing
Any 'interested party' may make representations in writing to the Council regarding the application before the 9th August 2018. It is an offence, knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and on summary conviction anyone found doing so is liable to a fine of £5,000.

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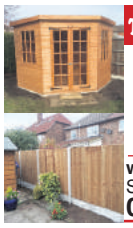

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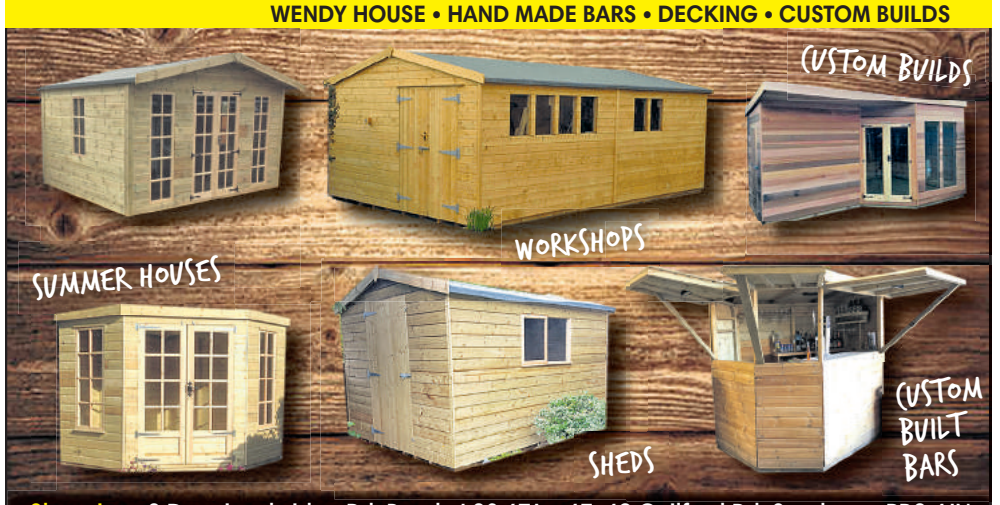

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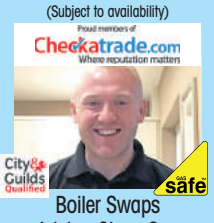

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For the first time the Berlingo is available in seven-seat form

Third generation of spacious Berlingo is available to order

THE third generation of Citroen's spacious Berlingo is available to order now.

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Go to www.citroen.co.uk to find out more about the new Berlingo, which will be in the showrooms by September.

Classic cars are big fun - but they come with their own challenges

I currently have four cars - but not just for bragging about when at the pub!

Life On Cars
DAVID SIMISTER
www.lifeoncars.co.uk

THE CAR in front – to paraphrase an old TV ad slogan – is my Toyota. Only it isn't going anywhere, because the vehicle hailed as the nation's 31st most reliable when it was new has decided to come over all un-Toyota-ish and break down.

An hour later and the verdict is in from the AA – the ignition contact switch, after nearly 20 years of being flicked back and forth on commutes, is finally on the way out and needs a £20 replacement to make sure I can get to work on time. This sort of thing shouldn't be a problem if you're sensible and employ a vaguely new car to do your bidding – but if you aren't and rely almost entirely on old ones, the next few paragraphs are probably going to sound painfully familiar.

At the moment I have four cars at my disposal, and that's not for pub bragging purposes, seeing as they collectively cost less than a year's depreciation on a new 5-Series to buy. It's a bit like having a 72-piece cutlery set from an upmarket department store – you might not use all the bits all the time, but for whatever you're cooking up you know you always have the right equipment handy.

Which in the event of the Toyota suddenly being out of action means turning to the Mazda MX-5 that I normally keep for holidays and visits to sun-kissed car shows, but unfortunately that's already at a garage, having its radiator looked at after getting all hot and bothered in 30-degree heat on a classic car run.

No bother. I'll just turn to the rather unlikely set of wheels I've been tasked with running for a year by my colleagues at *Classic Car Weekly* – a Reliant Robin that I snapped up last Christmas for £600. Alas, that was out of action at roughly the same point Big Ben chimed in New Year, after a couple of mates and I discovered that its front crossmember was made largely out of rust and needed a total overhaul. We've been tinkering with it ever since.

All of which leaves just one car in my life that I know I can rely on – my MGB GT, built 46 years ago by British Leyland. Despite its rather faded paintwork this is usually one of the few cars I own that I can normally depend on to fire up, its B-series humming excitedly in anticipation every time I hop in. Or at least it would do had I not left it for ages and let its battery go flat because I'd been too busy breaking down in the other cars.

They don't build 'em like they used to – they build 'em a lot better. Feel free to think I'm a bit bonkers for putting up with four old cars as opposed to one vaguely decent one, but they're all brilliant. When they work, that is…

David Simister is the editor of Classic Car Weekly

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Amount of Credit	£15,157.08
47 Monthly Payments	£229.00
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Annual Mileage	5,000
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APR Representative	3.9%

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Domigan scores 49 as Burscough battle to hold out for a draw at Wigan

BURSCOUGH remain in the bottom two in the First Division after a draw at Wigan.

Elected to bat first, Wigan, thanks to runs from Declan Mulvey 42*, Aaron Redmond 36 and skipper Charles Taylor 34 were able to declare on 198-9 with Chris Andrews 3-36 and Ryan Hughes 3-68 taking most of the wickets to fall.

In reply, Brendan Domigan top scored with 49 as Burscough held on for a draw on 115-9 with Jordan Hampson taking 3-4.

Southport & Birkdale still have a sizeable lead at the top even after they were held to a draw at home against Prestatyn, the hosts chose to bat and were dismissed for 160 with Harry May 62 scoring his maiden first team half century and Adam Phillips scoring 27 against a bowling attack led by Peter Cassidy 4-41 and Ryan Westwell 3-21.

In reply, the visitors slipped to 0-2 forcing them to abandon any thoughts of going for the run chase as they closed on 125-7 off 52 overs with Cassidy unbeaten on 62*, whilst Gary Keedy took 3-39 with the ball.

Fleetwood Hesketh put up a pointless display at home against struggling Wavertree, the hosts were put in to bat and soon dismissed for just 78, thanks to a fine spell of bowling from Matt Nation 5-26 and Stewart Guy 4-13. In reply, skipper Josh Birch smashed an unbeaten 51* off 37 balls to steer his side to victory on 79-1 in 11.5 overs.

Ainsdale suffered a 61 run defeat at home against Birkenhead Park, the visitors were asked to bat first and were duly bowled out for 136, with Martyn Farrell producing his best figures in an Ainsdale shirt with 6-19, whilst Ahmad Abdullah 31 and Jordan Relph 30 top scored with the bat. In reply, the hosts were rolled over for 75 with Mark Lucas top scoring with 32, whilst the rest were undone by Abdullah 5-17 and Ales Harris 4-41.

Ormskirk knocked off top of table after defeat to Formby

Vahaluwala and Aitchison the chief destroyers with ball before guiding visitors to narrow victory with bat

ORMSKIRK slipped down to second place in the Liverpool & District Cricket Competition Premier Division on Saturday after suffering a two wicket defeat at home against third placed Formby, *writes Glenn Wallworth.*

Electing to bat first, Ormskirk were dismissed for just 134 with Gary Knight top scoring with 22, with the chief destroyers with the ball being Lukman Vahaluwala 3-33 and Ben Aitchison 3-40.

In reply, Vahaluwala top scored with 27, before Aitchison 24* and Sabbir Patel 16* guided Formby to victory on 137-8.

Northern moved to the top of the table after a huge 149 run win at Highfield.

The visitors were asked to bat with skipper James Cole leading the way with an unbeaten 82, whilst he was ably supported by Justin Snow 58 and Chris Laker 39 as the visitors declared on 224-5, with Rob Halliwell taking 3-83.

Tomas Sephton then took four wickets for 40 and Jamie Barnes and Justin Snow two wickets each as Highfield were dismissed for just 75.

Bootle lost by a single wicket at Leigh, the visitors were asked to bat and thanks to Danny Davies 61, Neil Williams 53 and Will Hale 31 were able to declare on 200-9, with Toby Bulcock 5-63 and Lewis Pearson 4-19 took all nine wickets between them.

In reply, opener Ross Zelem top scored with 83, whilst skipper Tom Foster and Hedley Molyneux both made 30 as the hosts reached 201-9 to secure the narrowest of victories, with Bharat Tripathi 4-36 and Chris Liptrot 3-86 taking the majority of the wickets to fall.

Maghull beaten in high scoring thriller

IN the Second Division, Maghull lost despite racking up 252-9 declared at home against Old Xaverians, with Jon Ring scoring 67, skipper Paul Walters 60 and Josh Mahoney 34, whilst Mark Doyle took 3-48

In reply, Xaverians skipper Ian Carroll hit a century (105 inc 9x4 & 2x6), Matt North 36 and Josh Dilworth 35 to see the visitors to victory on 253-8, with Anthony Molloy taking 3-37.

Southport Trinity were beaten by eight wickets at leaders Caldy, the visitors were asked to bat first and recovered from 71-8 to post 143 up on the board, thanks to a maiden unbeaten half century from Aussie Luke Falkiner 53* and 19 from skipper Geoff Thornton, whilst the pick of the bowlers was Zaighum Abbas with 5-47. In reply, Tyrone Evans hit a subdued unbeaten 28* allowing Haroon Khan to blast his side to victory with an unbeaten 95* as the leaders romped to victory on 147-2.

Hightown St Mary's recorded a seven wicket home win over Sutton to move closer to a tightly packed mid table, the visitors chose to bat and thanks to Adam Onion 74, Joseph Noctor 68 and Jamie Greener 30* were able to declare on 242-3. In reply, Jayden Schadendorf 91, Arslan Dar 79 and skipper Ben Ashcroft 47* all helped propel the hosts to victory on 245-3.

This weekend's local LDCC fixture's (1pm start): Bootle v Ormskirk, Formby v Wallasey, Northern v Rainford, Burscough v Ainsdale, Liverpool v Fleetwood Hesketh, Sefton Park v Southport & Birkdale, Old Xaverians v Hightown St Mary's, Parkfield Liscard v Maghull and Southport Trinity v St Helens Town.

Hot weather causes pre-season chaos as clubs forced to sweat over dry pitches

By **Neil Leatherbarrow**

SKELMERSDALE United's highly anticipated friendly against League Two side Morecambe has been switched to JMO Sports Park due to the warm weather drying up their home pitch.

The hot spells has meant Skem's home pitch is too hard and bumpy to be deemed safe, meaning the fixture has been moved to the artificial grass at JMO.

It will be a huge loss of gate money for the club, and the best Skem can do is make up the financial shortfall by taking a bucket collection on the night.

It is scheduled to kick off at 8.05pm on Friday, July 27.

A club official said: "It is a big problem. I just hope the spectators will realise this and dig deep for a game that brings a Football League team to Skelmersdale."

Burscough have had similar problems but have not yet lost any home games. On Saturday they were due to play away at North-West Counties Division One Nelson, but that had to be called off due to the pitch.

However they were grateful to New Mills who agreed to host them on Saturday afternoon at short notice.

The Linnets didn't return the favour though, beating the Derbyshire side 4-2, Chad Whyte, Jamie Clark, Matty Ward and Prince Ekpolo getting the goals.

Burscough will not be playing at Victoria Park until the first day of the North-West Counties season (Saturday, August 4), when they host Hanley Town. They have two more pre-season games scheduled, having played last night (Tuesday, July 24) at Vauxhall Motors.

The Linnets will play this Saturday against AFC Liverpool at the JMO Sports Park, kick-off 1pm, then they travel to Radcliffe Borough on Tuesday, July 31, kick off 7.45pm.

Skelmersdale are due to host Blyth AFC on Saturday, July 28, but a venue and kick off time is to be announced this week.

They are away to Ashton Town on Tuesday, July 31 and are due to host Airbus UK on Saturday August, 4 the advice is to look at the Skelmersdale United website or in the Champion next week.

At least Skem can guarantee one game, on Saturday, August 11 they are away to Hyde United and they play on an artificial surface so the weather won't stop that one.

A club official said: "The main problem is cost. To do the necessary amount of watering to maintain a pitch in this very hot weather creates astronomical costs.

"The water authorities have sports grounds on water metering and you are talking into five figures for water costs in this hot weather, most of the clubs just cannot justify spending that much on water. It means that the required feeding and seeding just simply hasn't taken place. It's a nightmare for them."

It is not just Skelmersdale and Burscough who are having problems. Bigger clubs like Chorley and Lancaster City have had to switch games recently to protect their pitches and they have bigger budgets than Skem and Burscough.

Chad Whyte scored for Burscough on Saturday. Picture by Marc Taylor

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